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Documenting an Imperfect Past: Examining Tampa's Racial Integration through Community, Film, and Remembrance of Central Avenue

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Documenting an Imperfect Past: Examining Tampa's Racial Integration through Community,
Film, and Remembrance of Central Avenue

by

Travis R. Bell

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Communication
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Dedication

First and foremost, this dissertation project is dedicated to the lasting memory of Central Avenue and the people who shaped its place in Tampa's history. Second, this project is dedicated to my family for all their support during my doctoral journey. I could not have completed this amazing experience without them. To my wife Beth, thank you for your unwavering support during this process and for allowing me to undertake this important journey. To my children Hilary and Drew, I hope this project can help you better understand the world for all its complexities and potential if you always maintain an open mind. To my parents Hugh and Flo, thank you for instilling in me the importance and value of education. To my in-laws Stan and Chris, thank you for willingness to help throughout this journey. Finally, I want to recognize Ryan Watson for his selfless work and lasting friendship that formed during the creation of this documentary film. Without everyone mentioned in this dedication, this project could not have produced the incredible life-long connection I now have with Central Avenue and its people.

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One friend who deserves acknowledgement is Ryan Watson. You are much more than a co-worker. You are an amazing friend and someone who has pushed me to reach new heights as a documentary filmmaker. When this project began and you expressed an interest to help, I never imagined how willing you would be with your time, your equipment, and your support. This journey has brought us closer together as co-workers and more importantly as friends. Thank you for everything you did for me and this project during this journey.

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Abstract

This research examines the Civil Rights Movement in Tampa, Florida through documentary film to recognize an imperfect past and visually reconstruct Central Avenue as a physical and Thirdspace site of remembrance located at an intersection of race and community. Motivated by an ethnographic approach and through community engagement, *Tampa Technique: Rise, Demise, and Remembrance of Central Avenue* is a 54-minute film that explores Central Avenue's rise to prominence through segregation, its physical and symbolic demise as a racialized site of communal space, and how it is remembered through collective and public memory in the location it once occupied. Documentary film provides an engaging platform to present research in a thoughtful and provocative way to recover lost histories that can inform audiences about structural and systematic inequalities that remain in overt and covert ways. The purpose of this written document supplements the film and takes issues of privilege, reflexivity, and subjectivity into account to interrogate tensions of "self" and "other" encountered during the film's production and to translate how a visual representation of Central Avenue developed and unfolded as a present form of community participation and intervention through remembrance. The entire documentary is not available online due to copyright restrictions. However, a three-minute [documentary trailer is available on Vimeo](#).

Preface

The primary analytical work completed for this dissertation project was the production of a 54-minute film titled *Tampa Technique: Rise, Demise, and Remembrance of Central Avenue*. The film was created during a 15-month production process that began in April 2016 and concluded with a public screening of the film on June 10, 2017 at the Robert W. Saunders, Sr. Public Library in Tampa, Florida. This written document serves to supplement the film to provide a timeline for the project, explain the role of theory in a visual project, and provide filmmaker reflections of the entire process of how the project unfolded while making the film.

The overall dissertation project is best understood akin to action research in which theory does not explicitly appear in the analysis conducted through the film. This collaborative project afforded an opportunity for community engagement and intervention through a public event to reconstitute Central Avenue in a coming together of memory and remembrance. Instead of theory guiding the research, theory helped reshape how the filmmaker approached the film production and storytelling process to more fully understand community, race, and space. The theoretical frameworks outlined in chapter two are interspersed throughout the remainder of this written document to offer a template of how someone might approach a filmmaking process, especially of historically racialized places within a larger social context.

While reading this supplemental text, its intention is not to develop as a traditional dissertation that builds from theory but intends to serve as a reflexive roadmap to understanding how *Tampa Technique* was produced, offer an introduction to Central Avenue and the film's

participants, and highlight when and how theory influenced decision-making that offered new challenges to explore during the film's production. Therefore, it is important to recognize that ethnographic methods and theoretical guidance weaved significantly throughout the entire storytelling process, but the film performs the analytical output to provides a collaborative, reflexive space for reconstituting memory centered on community and race.

Chapter 1:

Introduction

The intersection of history, media, and race is complex and embedded within a variety of sociocultural contexts. These issues and contestations must be examined to formulate an understanding of issues that permeated the national landscape within the United States that affected racialized, segregated communities. Since the country's formation and especially during the 19th and 20th centuries following the abolition of slavery, the Civil War, and passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to name just a few seminal moments, greater contextualization of the racial tensions situated within the U.S. can be understood through personal, and often silenced, narratives within isolated communities. This approach to documenting an imperfect past (e.g., segregation) through lost histories (e.g., Central Avenue) can provide a synopsis of how the racial landscape influenced political and societal understanding through an independent, yet interconnected, confluence of multifaceted perspectives before and during legal integration.

The racialized narratives across the U.S., especially in the geographic South, have emerged in a variety of presented forms. These accounts span from (1) historical, interpretive, fiction, and non-fiction books, (2) academic journal articles, (3) journalistic accounts, (4) oral histories, and (5) documentary and cinematic film. Additionally, these stories and reports highlight the most volatile and visual representations of this tumultuous era from police brutality in Birmingham and Selma, Alabama; the lynching of Emmitt Till in Money, Mississippi; school desegregation with the Little Rock Nine at Central High School; and the assassination of Dr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. in Memphis, Tennessee to name just a few that dominate the historical discourse of U.S. sites of struggle for desegregation of public schools, facilities, and transportation along with deadly violence. These narratives are significant but cannot generalize the experiences of all cities and states across the South.

This dissertation research offers a new site of struggle to analyze the Civil Rights Movement at the local level in Tampa, Florida. The goal is to situate its mostly untold story alongside and within a more-widely circulated national narrative. To unearth the “Tampa Technique” utilized by the city to remain outside of the more nationally-recognized visible remembrances of the movement, a non-traditional dissertation format of documentary film offers a reflective space to reconstruct and reconstitute how the city navigated civil rights behind this invisible technique. Film provides an outlet to link disparate moments across the movement and connect them to a racialized community to examine power. Through a collaborative community approach guided by ethnographic principles, using film as the lens of analysis allows the technique and its implications to become visible and real through memory.

Central Avenue is the historically black business district that emerged in the early 1900s through segregation. The community and physical structures once known as Central Avenue remained until 1974 when the last business closed and the buildings were razed to the ground. This study examines the story of Central Avenue through its rise to prominence, its physical and symbolic demise as a site that intersects community and race, and how it is remembered through collective and public memory in the space it once occupied. This chapter outlines the following sections: (1) overview of the issue, (2) purpose of the study, and (3) significance of the study. The second chapter offers an overview of the theoretical frameworks significant to the filmmaking process and how film provides a space to blend theory and practice. The third

chapter articulates how and why documentary film is the proper method to interpret and synthesis the story of Central Avenue and the “Tampa Technique” guided by ethnographic approach. The fourth chapter outlines the reflexive process of making *Tampa Technique* and weaves how theory influenced constructing the story as well as identifying key themes to explore and include in the film. Additionally, this chapter reflects on how the filmmaker managed issues



Figure 1: This photo from the early 1970s provides one of the last images of Central Avenue. Joyner’s Cotton Club sign is visible and was the last business to close in 1974.

Photo courtesy: *Tampa Bay Times*

of power, privilege, and subjectivity. The final chapter synthesizes the project through its first public screening, audience response to the film, and participation in a National Endowment for

the Humanities (NEH) summer institute about how the U.S., specifically the South, recognizes its imperfect racial past through history and memory.

Overview of the Issue

The primary project is a 54-minute documentary film about the rise, demise, and remembrance of Central Avenue. The film is necessary to navigate the civil rights movement in Tampa for all its complexities and governmental networking behind public forums and how the city responded to public displays opposing the city's process of controlled negotiations. Central Avenue provides the lens of analysis to explore how these dealings indirectly and directly affected Central Avenue as a place. The film explores expansive issues locally, nationally, and culturally. Therefore, Central Avenue serves as the metaphorical central space to remain in motion throughout the film that connects seminal moments and how each affected Central Avenue as a racialized site of community. This project explores issues that include (1) the historical significance of Central Avenue to black life in Tampa; (2) the unique formation of a bi-racial committee in 1959; (3) the controlled and methodical integration of public facilities; (4) the role of civil and racial unrest in the United States, especially in the 1960s, bookended by the 1960 lunch counter sit-in movement and a 1967 riot in and around Central Avenue; (5) the shifting role of journalism during this tumultuous time as seen through the white and black press; (6) the negative impact of urban redevelopment and interstate construction on minority communities; and (7) how Central Avenue is memorialized in public space on the grounds of the physical place it once occupied. This documentary emphasizes the pivotal role of visual research methods to produce a historiography that can “intervene in many spheres—within academia, within the mediascape, within the real world” (Waugh, 2007, p. 2) through interdisciplinary concepts and perspectives.

Central Avenue was the flourishing center of black life in Tampa beginning in the early 1900s (Howard & Howard, 1994) through the 1960s, yet as desegregation made its way into Tampa, the black-owned businesses struggled on Central Avenue. During this time, the city of Tampa formed a bi-racial committee of six white and six black business owners, ministers, and civil leaders charged with fostering peaceful racial integration centered around economic potential and concerns with a goal to remain outside of the political and mediated integration efforts across the South. The peaceful approach was challenged by a lunch counter sit-in demonstration on February 29, 1960. The Tampa sit-in was contentious but not violent. The flash point of hostility occurred on June 11, 1967 when a white patrolman, James Calvert, pursued, shot, and killed an unarmed 19-year-old black man, Martin Chambers, who was one of three suspects in a photo supply store burglary. Three days of racial unrest, primarily located around Central Avenue, ended on June 14 and resulted in significant structural and social damage. Chambers is forever linked to the community's racialized history and provides context for how Tampa's story still resonates in the 21st century. Thus, his story helps demonstrate how Tampa was not a peaceful city during desegregation as it has been perceived historically. This project situates the 1967 destruction within the historical context alongside deadlier – and more publicized – riots in Watts, Detroit, and Newark during the long hot summer of 1967 (Hrach, 2011). Finally, Central Avenue provides an important site to examine power through the influence of urban renewal and interstate construction that targeted minority communities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this project is to explore a complex story through a visual representation to reconstruct Central Avenue in the present within a sociohistorical context at the intersection of community and race. A documentary is the visual output to create a unique, holistic perspective

of Central Avenue that produces what Harding (1993) defines as maximizing objectivity through a wide range of standpoints. Multiple theoretical perspectives guide this research project with the goal to think trialectically. Soja (1996) describes this process as discovering Thirdspace through an examination that includes the historical, social, and spatial aspects of society. Within the context of Central Avenue, thinking trialectically situates the historical elements that forced the construction and creation of Central Avenue during segregation, the societal forces that aided in its growth and evolution within Tampa, and the spatial reality that was Central Avenue, how it is imagined through memory, and how it exists in the physical space through a park and public remembrance.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this project is to visually reconstruct a community motivated by an ethnographic approach through community engagement. Despite a lack of physical location for Central Avenue in the present, this documentary provides a sense of social life (Wolcott, 2001) once associated with an actual place reinterpreted through memory. The goal of this documentary is to situate Central Avenue as a lived and imagined community in the present (Silverstone, 1999) for future awareness. It is time to understand Central Avenue within that context from people who lived it and those of us who are left to imagine it in our own version or representation. The way this happens is to understand the meaning of Central Avenue as a community through “repositories of symbols” (Cohen, 1985, p. 19). These mentally constructed symbols represent the meaning, sense of place, and possibility that was and is Central Avenue. The story of Central Avenue can inform audiences about structural and systematic inequalities that were prevalent in Tampa less than 50 years ago and remain in overt and covert ways.

This project not only hopes to challenge these power imbalances through the lens of Central Avenue, but it generates an opportunity to challenge an academic research system to value the visual as a transformative research methodology and production (MacDougall, 1998). Instead of limiting dissertation projects to text with the visual left to the imagination through the re-inscription of the researcher, through technological innovations and want of filmmakers, the visual component provides a mode to see culture (Bird, 2007) that was previously unavailable and is still underutilized.

Chapter 2:

Theoretical Frameworks

Conceptualizing and constructing a documentary raises several overarching questions, especially if the film is grounded within academic research. Which theory frames the approach to documentary filmmaking? Who is the audience? What is the hopeful outcome? How can that outcome assist with perceptible and social change? This chapter answers these questions with the understanding that a documentary as a standalone product has the power to change attitudes through new knowledge construction (Bell, 2016). Aguayo (2014) explains that documentaries offer a platform “to facilitate public deliberation about undocumented local history” (p. 256) with grassroots organizations (e.g., libraries, churches, activist organizations) that evolve through public screenings. Merging new information about history with public dialogue is the goal for this dissertation project.

Theory is not explicitly discussed within the final produced film. However, the principles and tenets embedded within theoretical perspectives serve as a guide and roadmap to producing the film. Racial formation theory and standpoint theory combine to offer a theoretical lens to justify the documentary as the ideal form to best situate the story of Central Avenue and all its complexity as well as who has authority to speak on its behalf. Additionally, a discussion of Thirdspace and visual representation explores how film can help critique and historicize Central Avenue. In this chapter, racial formation theory is defined alongside the concept of whiteness to ground how Central Avenue functioned within the sociohistorical constraints from which it

formed. Next, standpoint theory is defined to describe why it is significant for this project to begin and end from the standpoint of Central Avenue as a racialized community of people operating from the margins. Then the concept of Thirdspace is discussed as both a conceptual and spatial place that situates Central Avenue as a form of representation presented and memorialized through public spaces. Finally, documentary film is outlined as the cohesive platform to visually present Central Avenue as a trialectic story.

Racial Formation Theory and Whiteness

Racial formation theory is defined as “the sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed” (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 109). The societal and historical understanding of race within a global context varies across nations. Within the United States, race is an ideological construction rooted in the Constitution that was created and developed by – and for – white men. The ideology of race can appear as clear as black and white through the U.S. Census but realistically racialized division emerges and exists through perception and representation across countless public forms including media and politics (Kertzer & Arel, 2002; Deuze, 2005). Beginning with colonization, violently contested through the Civil War, and legally debated and implemented before and during the Civil Rights Movement, race becomes a lived, embodied experience unique to every individual but is often shared through collective identity.

Race is, therefore, socially constructed (Omi & Winant, 2015). This construction occurred over centuries of phenotypic marking that has been undone scientifically but not socially (Squires, 2014). The racialized markers remain and have fueled unjust hate and violence to millions of human beings. These occurrences throughout history are based upon perceived differences, largely through race, but also inclusive of gender, sexual preference, nationality,

ethnicity, and many more categories. These differences are marked against whiteness, which provides a structurally advantaged location outlined by cultural practices (Frankenberg, 1993). Understood in literature as the unmarked and invisible norm, “whiteness accrues privilege and status” (Fine, 1997, p. 57) for whites, even more so for men, to the detriment of “others” who are conversely marked as not the norm. Therefore, whiteness occupies an asymmetrical relationship grounded in colonialism (Frankenberg, 2001) and a disproportionate, racialized imbalance in

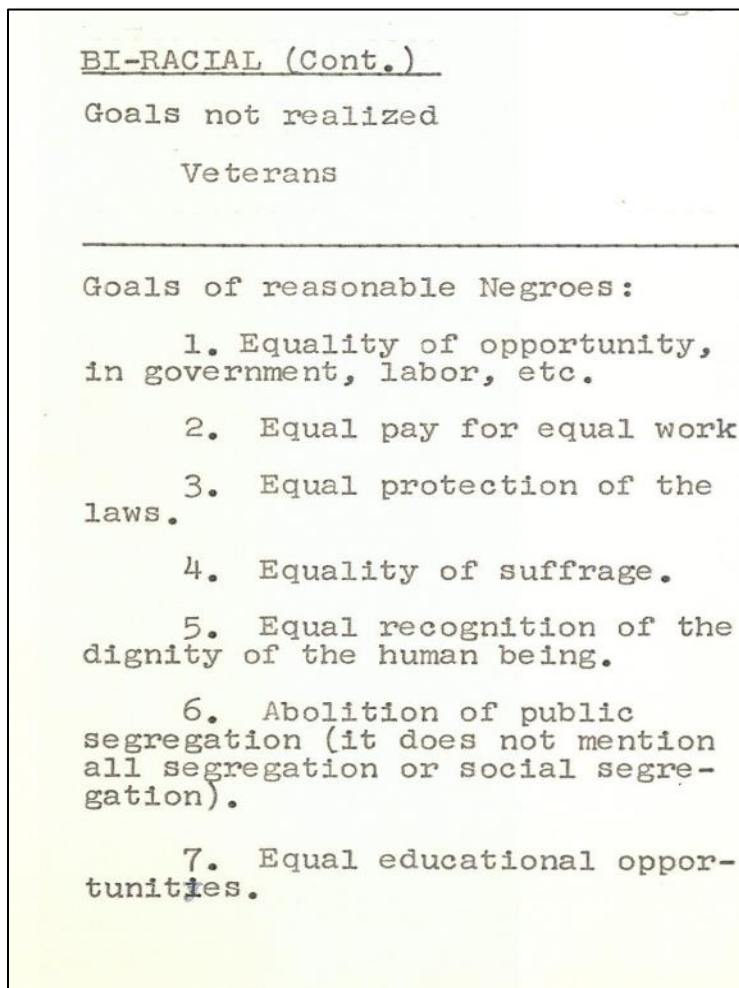


Figure 2: Notecard from bi-racial committee outlining “goals of reasonable negroes” in the 1950s. Courtesy: The Civil Rights Papers of Cody Fowler and Steven F. Lawson, USF Special Collections.

economics, leadership, and thus upward mobility.

Racial projects produce racialized asymmetries. Racial projects are ideological and practical in that the projects are “simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial identities and meanings, and an effort to organize and distribute resources (economic, political, cultural) along particular racial lines” (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 125). Within the context of Central Avenue, the key themes the documentary explores are racial projects that reflect and respond to

how race is situated within social systems. These themes include segregation in schools and public spaces, unfair economic and political systems of power, and urban renewal that serves as physical and societal divisions across racial lines. The goal of any racial project is to adversely shift a societal norm (Omi & Winant, 2015). Racial projects that challenge whiteness can function to redistribute asymmetrical systems.

Andersen (2003) identifies three themes within whiteness studies: whiteness as norm, privilege, and social construction. The normative and social construction themes garner recognition and, at times, understanding. Where whiteness lacks recognition and understanding is within white privilege as a systemic, racist construct (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll, 2009). Through privilege is where whites gain status, thus producing the unfair opportunities afforded by a system that can reward unearned or undeserved advancement that is often expected based on not being the “other.” The construct of whiteness is embedded in the philosophical practice of legal policies, federal funding, wage inequality, and nearly every other hierarchical imbalance whether political, social, or systematic that favors whites. White privilege is generational, global, and afforded based on racial stratification that results in racism as a system of institutional arrangements (Andersen, 2003). Therefore, while many whites, were and/or are oblivious to the concept of whiteness, it is “hypervisible to people of color” (Rasmussen, Klinenberg, Nexica, & Wray, 2001, p. 10).

This problem of privilege ignited the 1960s as the most transformational time in the United States since the Civil War (Omi & Winant, 2015), and it sparked initial interest in this documentary project. Central Avenue provides a direct example of the real effects and consequences of whiteness and privilege (Frankenberg, 2001), which are embedded in media, law enforcement, politics, and education, just to name a few systems of inequality. In these

environments, Frankenberg (2001) explains whiteness is situated in structural (dis)advantage, as a “standpoint” of comparison, physical and psychological boundary markers, or as a historical product based upon how and from where an individual comes to understand their respective position and outlook. Thus, understanding and thinking about racial formation theory and whiteness together provided a foundation to begin the documentary project with a goal to examine multiple racial projects embedded within the Civil Rights Movement from a standpoint of who was marginalized in the process and how these racial projects served to construct disadvantaged boundaries.

Standpoint Theory

Frankenberg provides a connection for the idea of race as a point of origin for understanding whiteness. That intersection of race and standpoint is substantive for this documentary project. However, to build upon the rationale for racial formation theory and whiteness as foundational for this project, standpoint theory must combine with those concepts to holistically situate the positionality of the documentary participants within its historical context and throughout the creation of the documentary. As racial formation theory serves to analyze the sociohistorical structures and systems of domination, standpoint theory provides a feminist critical approach to knowledge production and power (Harding, 2004) that can assist with how the film attempts to untangle and connect varying racial projects.

Hartsock (1983) defines standpoint theory within an examination of feminist materialism as an “epistemological tool for understanding and opposing all forms of domination” (p. 283). Her examination of labor distribution across gendered lines reveals invisible tensions of male supremacy as a “powerful critique” (p. 284) only through the privileged position of women’s lives to challenge the ideological and institutional problems hidden by capitalism and patriarchy.

This privileged position of critique situates a standpoint within and defined by systems and structures concerned with deception, domination, and power. Hartsock (1983) linked her labor analysis to material interests that must be contested by situating knowledge historically through power. First, Marxist theory of class supersedes other societal factors to set limits and boundaries. Second, differing groups maintain conflicting visions of each other with dominant groups retaining partial understanding of a subversive group. Third, while the dominant group's vision is perverse, it cannot be falsely dismissed. Fourth, oppressed or marginalized groups struggle for representation. Finally, standpoint theory exposes how class-based, systematic limitations and struggles through oppression serve to liberate from historically-defined roles (Hartsock, 1983).

Standpoint theory allows for an examination of “collective historical subjectivity and agency and our ‘embodied’ accounts of the truth” (Haraway, 1988, p. 578). Collins (1986) expands the feminist standpoint approach with black feminism that serves to begin any analysis through a standpoint “of and for Black women” (p. S16). Her approach focuses on self-definition and self-valuation to challenge political and historical stereotypes of black women and replace the stereotypes with authentic, metanarrative images to reframe the master narrative. This shift in authority for accurate portrayal served to shift the power of representation to one produced by and for black women (Collins, 1986). Additionally, the application of self-definition and self-valuation situates a subjective position and vantage point from which to begin a conversation based upon lived experiences (Orbe, 1998). These understandings and representations of self were necessary means of survival, not a luxury (Collins, 1986), and took years to gain traction yet still are not even close to socially equitable. Thus, standpoints span a time-place continuum socially located within relationships, historical context, political environments, and economic

models (Hartsock, 1983) that explore shared standpoints of oppression and how to produce forms of everyday resistance (Collins, 1994).

Standpoint theory provides an organic synthesis of insight where oppressed standpoints enter the public sphere and achieve a collective voice (Harding, 1993). The synthesis occurs through an outsider-within approach that exposes tensions of power from historically excluded outsiders and this exposure challenges a paradigm within the insider community that historically maintains a powerful position (Collins, 1986). An important consideration is that all standpoints – whether from the outside or inside – vary based upon privilege or social location. Therefore, any analysis using standpoint theory cannot assume essentialist definitions or markers of where standpoints are culturally, historically, politically, or socially located (Wylie, 2003).

It is through a collective analysis of competing standpoints that provide what Harding (1993) defines as strong objectivity with the goal to accomplish rigor beyond the traditional journalistic ideology of objectivity rooted in fairness and equality (Schudson, 2001). Instead, objectivity should recognize and incorporate biases (Durham, 1998) to “offer competing constructions of reality” (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992, p. 373) that consider the



Figure 3: Female students participating in the February 29, 1960 lunch counter sit-in at F.W. Woolworth's. Photo courtesy: *Tampa Bay Times*.

standpoint of subjective daily lives and experiences to acknowledge standpoints of marginalized representation that span beyond media imagery to both incorporate and contrast publicly circulated media stories. Social movements, marginalized spaces, and people offer a unit of analysis that conceptualize the outsider-insider dichotomy not as aggregation of thoughts and ideas but instead provides a synthesis of how knowledge and power are constructed and challenged (Durham, 1998). The outcome generates an inverted analysis that counters mediated, partial accounts (Wylie, 2003). Therefore, maximizing objectivity is accomplished through a “rigorous ‘logic of discovery’” (Harding, 1993, p. 56) that produces knowledge on behalf of marginalized groups instead of for the dominant and systematically powerful group.

Harding (1993) outlines how subjects of knowledge within a standpoint theoretical lens contrast knowledge in four ways that lead toward maximized objectivity. First, standpoints are “embodied and visible” (p. 63) and thus provide first-person accounts of real people. Second, a “causal symmetry” (p. 64) exists between how knowledge is shaped by both real and imagined social forces. Third, communities collectively, historically, and socially construct and shape knowledge more than individuals. Fourth, knowledge is contradictory, unique, and incoherent based upon its multiplicity. These ideas of subjects of knowledge and community are further explored in the following section.

Racial formation theory and standpoint theory combine to provide a platform for marginalized communities and groups to achieve a standpoint through film that has otherwise been silenced since the demise of Central Avenue as a primary hub of black life in Tampa. The documentary follows the conceptual framework and ideology of standpoint theory that “makes visible a different, somewhat hidden phenomenon that we must work to grasp” (Harding, 2004, p. 8). It is with an understanding of race as a sociohistorical construct that allows a film to

grapple with two tensions of varying standpoints: a commitment to unearthing better knowledge based upon an understanding that power and politics are so deeply connected in how knowledge has been historically produced and circulated (Hallstein, 2000).

Thirdspace and Public Memory

Racial formation theory and standpoint theory outline and guide issues discussed in the film embedded within a sociohistorical context. However, a missing element remains specific to Central Avenue that must be considered. Thus, reflecting through Soja's (1996) Thirdspace can help situate the real and imagined version of Central Avenue through remembrance, both publicly and in personal memory, and the power of possibility offered in the physical space that politically has been largely ignored within Tampa's history. Thirdspace built upon Lefebvre's triple consciousness that operates through a complex triangulation of social, spatial, and temporal places that shift and change. Based upon lived experiences, meanings are situated differently for everyone with a recognition that time, space, and social meanings are inextricably interdependent (Soja, 1996).

Soja (1996) explains that engaging in Thirdspace conceptualization is a difficult and radical reimagining that challenges conventional epistemologies. His hope is to think trialectically. Instead of getting stuck in a duality that examines only social and historical forces, research must include the production of space as a third element to simultaneously consider. Soja identifies these trialectics of being as historicity, sociality, and spaciality. Within spatiality circulates a trialectic of conceived, lived, and perceived experiences. Thinking through spatial consciousness allows a unique space for resistance that is established outside the centrality of power embedded within only a sociohistorical context.

Thirdspace functions as a conceptual tool to analyze lived experiences through real and imagined environments. Firstspace is the real, physical, constructed environment including roads and buildings. Secondspace is representational in that it is imagined and perceived through visual presentations and remembrance. Thirdspace occupies a merger of physical presence in Firstspace with Secondspace operating as mediated expectations (Bustin, 2011). Thirdspace allows research to understand a wide range of perspectives and has been used to interpret meanings through the physical design and location of housing projects in Puerto Rico (Oliver-Didier, 2016), photographs that explore resistance in Northern Ireland (Gladwin, 2014), and homelessness in Las Vegas (Bustin, 2011). Each project uniquely interprets the convergence of how physical geographic space intersects with words, images, and ignored perspectives to provide greater contextual and spatial understanding.

Applying a Thirdspace concept relies heavily on remembrances (Soja, 1996) to explore a culturally diverse space as both a place and a perceived area (Bustin, 2011). Remembrance is entrenched in memory, which is a vague and ambiguous concept that provides reflection on real consequences and outcomes. Memory, like race, is socially constructed (Turner, 1998; Walker, 2010) and operates among spatial and historical differences. Who remembers what, how, and why against the backdrop of when and where can elicit innumerable thoughts and reflections. Further clouding memory is whether these thoughts are private or public, individual or collective, known or theorized. Memory is forceful, malleable, and tenuous depending on external and internal factors. Therefore, construction and re-inscription of memory can shift and change among people, places, and time.

Soja (1996) explores the conceptual idea of Thirdspace through an analysis of exhibits and spaces in Los Angeles. These spaces offer public memorials of varying historical moments

across the city. These forms of public memory are simultaneously linked to a past that ensures future remembrances through its public accessibility. Browne (2010) defines public memory “as a cultural process in which a shared sense of the past is created from the symbolic resources of human community” (p. 18) and further details that public memory is neither neutral nor without consequence. Phillips (2004) divides public memory into two distinct publics: “the memory of publics” and “the publicness of memory” (p. 3). First, the “memory of publics” invokes togetherness and an existence as one public. These memories though can be diluted by who is authorized to speak for the collective in public memory. Second, the “publicness of memory” is the public appearance of these efforts. This publicness can occur in singular products like documentary film, photographs, plaques, and other standalone texts or in collective spaces such as monuments, museums, and parks. Within this publicness there is often loss of memory through “persuasively packed and delivered” (Biesecker, 2002, p. 394) memorials that highlight accomplishments and omit or wash over detrimental times and individuals. Studies of public memory often include the intersection of media, national identity, and race within the packaging that has reached heightened attention because digital technology affords new ways to migrate analog memory into digital space.

The rationale for applying a Thirdspace approach within this project is two-fold. First, Central Avenue no longer exists as a physical, lived place. It is limited to individual memory that can be gathered to produce collective remembrance of the space, its meaning, and cultural value. Second, Perry Harvey, Sr. park now resides in place of what was Central Avenue and serves as a public memorial site that identifies several of the historic racial projects (e.g., urban renewal, interstate construction) that led to the demise of the space. Therefore, the park offers a centralized space of tension between the publicness of memory and memory of publics to

analyze its function in shaping how Central Avenue is remembered. Allowing for spatial analysis alongside the sociohistorical context makes for a richer film that brings the story to the present through a digital project that centralizes all aspects of a trialectic approach.

Digitally Mediated Representation

The park and its tangible structures offer one type of presentation of Central Avenue and the Civil Rights Movement in Tampa. Digital projects offer alternate forms of public memory and representation that can challenge and/or re-shape stories lost or embellished through the poetics of history and memory (Bell, 2011). Styles vary widely across forms of creative, visual expressions. Sutherland and Acord (2007) argue that “art creates space to think” (p. 126). Therefore, art can be any creative expression that provides openness for interpretation in how historical events, places, and people are remembered. Documentary film, painting, photographs, and sculptures are overarching forms of expression that evoke thought. However, Wolcott (2001) ascribes that art in any form must be discernibly recognized by an audience for aesthetic quality that reaches beyond just an ability to create an artistic expression. Thus, quality matters in public memory. Digital advancements across each of these creative outlets provide space for new publics (Abram & Pink, 2015) and thus new forms of representation and expressing memories.

Archivists, educators, journalists, and filmmakers have access to countless forms of memory that open new communication channels for constructing public memory (Caron & Brown, 2011) and space to generate alternate versions of what was once reserved for elite, official accounts (Silverstone, 1999). It is relevant to monitor how public memory is crafted and distributed because of the power dynamic about what is shared and how it is produced (Kaes, 1990). Mass mediated forms of public memory can be “a great leveler of sorts” (Biesecker, 2002, p. 394) but can result in omitting signifiers that were important to the collective but are not

accessible through the creation of public memory. Browne (2010) describes this as “a key paradox” (p. 19) of remembering while forgetting.

This paradox provides a challenge and opportunity for ethnographers, documentary filmmakers, and other creators of visual representations to make knowledge count by making knowledge accessible. If a visual representation is centered around understanding community through collaborative efforts (Rutten, 2016) to build community, then the hope becomes that others want to participate and engage in the finished product as a form of building consciousness to understand culture, people, and places (Bell, 2016). It is impossible to construct a uniform or consistent interpretation and representation of any community, but making efforts to see through their lens reveals a standpoint to understand and make sense of everyday life (Agar, 1996).

The ability to learn through visual representation is assessed great value (Novaes, 2010). Therefore, finding creative ways to produce visual learning opportunities, especially about historical events and places, provides “retrospective research” (Bateson, 1999, p. 155) opportunities through a nuanced way of reimagining both past events and future possibilities. However, this new image demands capacity (Block, 2008; Wolcott, 2001) to see what those imaginations look like in the present. Unlike hard scientific research that is in search of discovering something new, this blend of collectively assessing past, present, and future has a “certain fundamental kind of significance” (Bohm, 1968, p. 138). Block (2008) describes this significance through interpreting the writings of Werner Erhard as the “power of possibility” (p. 15). This possibility is only limited by an unwillingness to break from an interpretation of the past from which an original identity formed. Possibility opens the mind to learn something new. For example, if viewers of this documentary enter it with the power of possibility in their minds, then the options of learning can be limitless (Bohm, 1968). Visual representations offer a power

of possibility to blur boundaries between intercultural and transcultural experiences (MacDougall, 1998) to blend theory and practice in building community.

Blending Theory and Practice

Central Avenue is a hybrid of real and imagined, racialized and homogenous, historical and present. It offers an intersectional point of analysis for race interpreted and analyzed through competing and corroborating standpoints as well as Thirdspace construction that forgets and remembers in simultaneous and unique ways in the present tense of a past place. Realistically, Central Avenue could be explored through any of these theoretical and philosophical lenses. Instead, it is better served to understand Central Avenue as community, its greater good, and its far-reaching potential through a blended approach of theory and practice.

Racial formation theory provides the sociohistorical context that cannot be overlooked due to its conflicted construction and recognized function of division. Standpoint theory provides the starting point from where to begin the discussion and remain in dialogue with the influence of racial formation theory. Thirdspace offers the motive and context to triangulate these two theoretical foundations with the space of Perry Harvey, Sr. Park as a momentary and temporal place of public remembrance. Finally, the documentary as a digitally mediated representation centralizes these theories and stories into one space for knowledge construction, consumption, and reflection. Without this unique opportunity guided by the theoretical framework, this documentary would not offer the potential for social change that it could have if completed with the proper perspective of community first and everything else after.

Reflecting to Collins' outsider-within standpoint approach to examine power dynamics from outsider perspectives, film produced with an ethnographic vision of community immersion and collaborative engagement allows a researcher to situate "no longer (as) an outsider looking

in, but an insider of sorts, looking both ways” (Robertson, 2003, p. 86). Therefore, utilizing theoretical frameworks to assist in guiding a practice-led project allows a space for creating knowledge to contextualize cultures (Rutten, 2016). Specific to documentary film, it offers a space to blend theory and practice to build community across academic and public boundaries. Additionally, film provides a textual space for interrogation of process, product, and researcher to examine critical issues through epistemological and personal reflexivity (Bell, 2011).

Public memory can shape, challenge, or fit into social and political action through evocative stories based upon relevant and thorough interpretations of social and political issues. Therefore, this documentary project aims to inform the public through memory and publicness of collective remembrance of conceived, lived, and perceived experience of Central Avenue residents. Additionally, this documentary challenges the idea that Tampa integrated peacefully because Tampa was racially violent (Mormino, 1994), not necessarily through physical violence that was limited compared to other cities but through socially constructed violence of desegregation, economic deprivation, and construction of elevated transportation on the grounds and people of Central Avenue. This documentary intends to reinvigorate memories through an ethnographic approach linked to the past that assure its remembrance in the future (Casey, 2004).

When and why should people, places, and spaces be memorialized? There is no definitive answer, which is why constructing a documentary as a digitally mediated form of public memory is challenging. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that a visual representation must build upon theoretical and methodological contributions to create “new intellectual communities” (Wagner, 2002, p. 170). To best articulate the trialectic story of civil rights through Central Avenue, blending theory, ethnographic principles, and applied practices of filmmaking provides

an appropriate research process through a collaborative, creative project (Pink, 2004) to provide a public gathering intended as a communal sense of belonging (Thomashow, 1995).

Chapter 3:

Methodology

Building upon the theoretical frameworks outlined in chapter two, the intersection of community and race offers a site of remembrance to explore through an ethnographic lens. This documentary provides a unique space to share personal journeys of a cohesive perspective of civil rights and Central Avenue that can mix corroboration with contradiction because recollection of history is disjointed. However, the stories shared within the film require a wide range of intersecting participants beyond the interviewees. These journeys include the interviewees within the film, participants in gathering historical documentation, individuals as a third-party who help connect interviewees and new documents with a filmmaker, and the filmmaker who – in the case of the project – conducts and transcribes the interviews, organizes a script, and ultimately edits the finished product. The film evolves throughout this process to provide different perspectives and standpoints in time to gain an intuitive understanding (Wagner, 2007) to paint the most vivid visual image possible of Central Avenue situated sociohistorically in Tampa and re-interpreted through selective public memorials.

This chapter explains why documentary film is a more effective method of production and analysis for this dissertation project. This chapter is divided into four sections. First, ethnography is defined as the traditional methodological approach utilized by the filmmaker to understand the space once occupied by Central Avenue, guide how to approach the interviews, and describe the process of collecting visual data to complete the documentary film.

Ethnography also affords a unique method to analyze power dynamics on the ground. Second, examples of documentaries produced as dissertations at other universities explain how and why this method of interpretation and analysis is implemented and utilized. Third, the use of visual imagery and documentary as a form of representation is outlined as the preferred method to approach a historical project such the Civil Rights Movement as interpreted through Central Avenue that is representative of social life (Ragin & Amoroso, 2011) within a racialized space of utmost significance to understanding Tampa's history. Finally, a brief timeline provides an outline for how and when this project was completed.

Ethnography

Ethnography is a lived, learned experience. It can be difficult to teach and conceptualize because it is as much a methodological approach as it is a feeling and an understanding. In its simplest terms, ethnography describes people and ways of life (Angrosino, 2007). Ethnography is an examination and exploration of community. The role of the ethnographer is to create awareness of community and ways of its people through publicly explicit stories that should accurately portray those lives included in the ethnography for anyone who has never witnessed or participated in the group (Agar, 1996). Ethnography is an active process of navigating between various forms of meaning that must be analyzed and interpreted (Clifford, 1986). To manage and check these analyses and interpretations, reflexivity must be the starting point. Reflexivity includes self-awareness, recognition of biases, and regularly interpreting interactions with the participants in an ethnography (DeWalt, DeWalt, & Wayland, 1998). This reflexive approach situates the ethnographer's standpoint and allows the ethnographic inquiry to guide the process instead of the ethnographer pre-inscribing the outcome.

The idea and goal of consciousness continues to emerge within ethnographic inquiry (Agar, 1996; Cohen, 1985; MacDougall, 1998). This research project engages deeply with new levels of critical consciousness (Freire, 2007) as momentum to change attitudes. Goulet (2007) interprets critical consciousness as knowledge that “‘problematizes’ the natural, cultural and historical reality which s/he is immersed” (p. ix). The want to problematize is what motivates the documentary about Central Avenue. The way to problematize is through people, their stories, and situating all the complexities of the Tampa community deeply embedded systematically in the 1960s during the rise and demise of Central Avenue. It is not just interaction with people and uncovering new data to examine that situates this project as an ethnographic exploration. Agar (1996) provides a significant ethnographic foundation that “once research shifts to contact *between* humans, between forms of consciousness, the game changes” (p. 2). This ethnographic exploration intends to engage an audience, embrace critical reflection, invoke action, and facilitate change (Carlson, Engebretson, & Chamberlain, 2006).

Agar (1996) identifies power as the missing link in many ethnographic productions grounded in context and meaning. Explorations of power link racial formation theory and standpoint theory as foundational to problematize Tampa’s racial history through the story of Central Avenue. Power is embedded in systems of daily influence (e.g., educational, economic, political, structural). Clifford (1986) adds that these cultural forces produce relational power imbalances between people defined by historical, communicative processes. Examinations of power dynamics often reveal relationships that are negotiated and incompatible (Clifford, 1986). Specifically, critical ethnographers focus on how the interests of affluent groups oppress everyday citizens (Agar, 1996). Therefore, power must be explored to reach a “critical

landscape” (Agar, 1996, p. 26) that searches for how and why these power dynamics take shape as systems and work into communities.

Power is invisible, so it is difficult to outwardly represent and often a challenge to recognize and visualize. That is where the ethnographic principles of interviews and observation are crucial as a critical ethnographer and as a filmmaker. Additionally, visual artifacts and archival text contextualize and historically trace a story (Bell, 2004) to provide meaning for viewers and community members. The interviews must drive a story, its message, and the exploration of how power worked in opposition to the Central Avenue community. Ultimately, people share stories to engage in this sort of project, so to enter their space requires the negotiation of relationships that also reflect a dimension of power.

Ethnography can be intrusive and disruptive but hopefully produces fruitful discussion and understanding that makes this interruption acceptable. Agar (1996) acknowledges a concern for professional strangers hoping for intimate access, which raises suspicion from outsiders wanting to enter and participate within marginalized spaces and groups. Especially within the context of social and political issues surrounding race, an intertwining relationship between ethnographer and community members must be fleshed out and negotiated through direct, personal contact. Additionally, ethnographies offer only selected representations (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994) or partial truths (Clifford, 1986). Therefore, no matter how deep and meaningful a story becomes, omission of places, people, and moments are inevitable. That is the case with traditional ethnographies and documentary film, so a level of trust must develop between storyteller and community based on prior technical training and a desire to properly contextualize the story that is mutually negotiated with the participants. This trust must also be challenged by the interviewees and the audience to ensure an accurate depiction of an

ethnographic project. Wolcott (2001) defines this as “a capacity for careful observing and reporting” (p. 32) as well as a recognition of what the researcher knows and must still learn, which explains why reflexivity must drive and influence the ethnographic research process in the beginning and function as a mental moderator throughout the entire project.

Central Avenue is an ideal community that serves as a tangible and metaphorical expression of causal symmetry (Harding, 1993) in the production of knowledge and understanding of power. Thus, with Thirdspace as a conceptual guide to complement racial formation theory and standpoint theory, this documentary project explores the sociohistorical tension of inclusion and exclusion within and around Central Avenue and more broadly in Tampa along with the representation and reinscription of Central Avenue as a real and imagined space through historical documents, individual remembrance, and public memorial in Perry Harvey, Sr. Park. Therefore, examining Central Avenue as a liminal space of resistance beyond just a physical place offers varying perspectives on its real and perceived position of contestation and empowerment in Tampa throughout the first half of the 20th century (Oliver-Didier, 2016).

Documentary as Dissertation

Documentary is utilized in dissertation projects more often as a focus of analysis rather than a method of production. Analysis of documentary films has been the focus of countless dissertation projects in traditional print form, including examples that examined documentary as a genre to frame perception of urban spaces (Shapins, 2012), the rhetorical strategy of documentary film (Aguayo, 2005; Schoon, 2012), and documentary as social change (Falzone, 2008). The theoretical underpinning of what a documentary can do discussed through these previous dissertation projects is important to the foundational argument for this research project through the actual production of a documentary.

Documentary film as a dissertation is taking shape at several prominent universities but is still in its relative infancy. Within the U.S. but outside the scope of traditional film schools, the University of Pennsylvania is a leader in this process through an interdisciplinary space that includes anthropology, communication, and social policy to mix theory embedded in traditional academic disciplines with practice. What the final product looks like is a navigation between doctoral candidate and dissertation committee. To gain proper understanding of the value of documentary as dissertation, I met on multiple occasions with Dr. John Jackson in person and by phone to understand how they approach these projects at Penn. Dr. Jackson is a filmmaker and the dean of the School of Social Policy and Practice. These projects include some written component with the film serving as the analytical tool in the process (J. Jackson, personal communication). For example, Rocio Nunez completed her dissertation project through a literature review produced in script form. Her one-hour film *Woman with a Movie Camera* explored challenges faced by female filmmakers in film school as well as in the film industry. The film included 11 on-camera interviews and limited video of Hollywood films and statistics to support stereotypes faced by female filmmakers and their films. Her dissertation abstract explained that “this film examines some of the vernacular and industry-related discourse that attempts to explain the under-representation of women in Hollywood film” (Nunez, 2015, p. 1). The documentaries at Penn intend to make a difference but the output is specific to the filmmaker and does not ascribe to a one-size-fits-all model.

Other universities afford creative dissertation expression. Harvard University offers the Sensory Ethnography Lab to “promote innovative combinations of aesthetics and ethnography” (“Sensory ethnography lab,” n.d.). The lab supports students completing documentary projects in media anthropology and critical media studies. At the University of Illinois, Celianny Rivera

produced two films, *Reina de mi Misma/Queen of Myself: Las Krudas d' Cuba* and *T con T: Lesbian Life in Contemporary Havana*, as part of her dissertation. The print version of the dissertation is an autoethnography of her experience as a filmmaker and exploration of combining visual and written content to “broaden the field of Communications by demonstrating ways to integrate documentation through feminist ethnographic praxis” (Rivera, 2011, p. 2). These examples of thought-provoking, engaged documentaries that are theoretically grounded provide a few approaches to integrating documentary into dissertation research.

Through the exploration of identifying documentaries produced as dissertations, *The Authentic Dissertation* makes a compelling case for how a dissertation project through alternate research methodologies can reach broader audiences. The book is organized with each chapter as an interview with different doctoral students who discuss their interpretation of an authentic dissertation in a form best suited for their ability and for an intended outcome and audience. For example, Jennifer Mervyn at the University of British Columbia and Christini Ri at Fielding Graduate University produced video ethnographies. Mervyn documents the lives of four youths in British Columbia making successful transitions from life on the streets based on her personal experience of going through a similar transition. She argues that film offers utility to raise awareness and potential to engage policy makers in understanding how representation can be influenced by film. Ri explains that film creates a “transformative experience” (p. 138) and a unique lens to explore multiple theoretical perspectives in a collective space through film (Jacobs, 2008). Ultimately, documentary film offers an authentic space of representation that raises questions and facilitates discussion, but not necessarily provide a conclusive argument. Social change evolves and does not have to provide closure. Instead, film opens a new space for understanding social change and to challenge normative thinking.

Why a Documentary?

Tampa Technique is inspired by the previously discussed dissertation projects and processes as well as the documentary *Seizing Justice: The Greensboro 4* that aired on the Smithsonian Channel. The story introduces four students from North Carolina A&T who sparked a national lunch counter sit-in movement beginning in February 1960. I first watched this documentary in the summer of 2015. It maintained my interest and attention in understanding a time and place in history that was so unfamiliar beyond a history textbook. The film is engaging, provocative, insightful, disturbing, frustrating, and motivating. In summary, it is a powerful film to foreground a historical moment in a present context to renew a focus on race in the U.S. to “explain the continued contradictions, ambivalence, and paradoxes surrounding the representations and realities of race in America” (Triece & Lacy, 2014, p. 3). After watching this film, I wanted to produce a film to educate myself and a broader public about Tampa’s story in a similar way. Therefore, in this section, I explain the rationale to produce a documentary film as the primary mode of analysis for my dissertation.

In learning about the Greensboro 4, what stands out in that film is how the images and words function in tandem (Novaes, 2010) with music to elicit emotion, engage with who is talking so the viewer can see, hear, and feel the passion, concern, and determination in the voices, while providing visual context to those senses and emotions that simply cannot be explained in text. In the key moments of the film, power is exposed in real ways through personal experience. It is felt through lived moments, reflections, and collective remembrances that provide a cohesive, contextual, historical, and social understanding of Greensboro in 1960. The film provides an interaction of subjective standpoints in a unique space produced through

the interplay of images and sounds with the viewer. Those constructed and re-imagined moments were produced in the same subjective, yet real, process of content creation (Stanczak, 2007).

One challenge to portraying the civil rights era in the U.S. is to avoid what many contemporary, mainstream films do, which is shape racism as a thing of the past that focus on the positive, socially accepted outcomes. These films often gloss over the institutional, structural, and systematic racism that was, and still is, evident. Conversely, documentary film provides a specific space to produce counter-memory to the socially, historically circulated narratives of civil rights (Aguayo, 2014; Hoerl, 2007). Counter-memory is offered through this documentary as a mode of representation more concerned with the subtleties of Central Avenue in the social fabric of Tampa's history and minority community as a space constructed by segregation and deconstructed through integration (Ragin & Amoroso, 2011). These are far from positive, but instead hope to paint a reality through "shared remembrance that offer social lessons about the role of the past and its implications for the present" (Hoerl, 2007, p. 71). Like the format and powerful story of *Seizing Justice*, my film is a dynamic mixture of personal narratives, historical realities, and constructed story that provides a durable visual representation that blends oral histories, textual analysis, and archival research into a cohesive story. This combination of academic rigor through critical examination produced with the creative outlet of film that is comprehensive but digestible for the general viewer explains why this project best situates as a documentary beyond a traditional text-based dissertation.

Timeline

This documentary project began in April 2016 as an idea to provide historical context of the Tampa civil disturbance in 1967 when Martin Chambers was shot and killed on June 11. The original goal was to produce a film about that day and the three days that followed in Tampa's

history. The plan was to produce it as a 50th anniversary remembrance of this moment and situate it within the U.S. civil unrest from 1965 through 1968 that involved public violence and disruption as part of the national protests for civil rights. However, following five individual meetings in April 2016 to gain a greater understanding of this moment within Tampa's history, this project exploded well beyond its original intent and began its evolution into this dissertation project. The meetings throughout April not only re-shaped the project but played a pivotal role in my understanding of the significance of Central Avenue to black communities in Tampa, and it shaped my approach to this project as a white filmmaker. Each of these meetings are discussed in the next chapter as they afforded the opportunity and want for me as a filmmaker to not only accurately portray Central Avenue but to utilize it as the central theme to weave the story of the civil rights movement in Tampa.

Shortly after these influential meetings and conversations during a two-week stretch in April 2016, I read *The Art of Fieldwork*. Wolcott (2001) writes that "each of us has a story to tell if the right person happens to come along and ask" (p. 249). My relationship with Central Avenue bonded quickly through conversations, reading, and soul searching to produce a dissertation to be more, to do more, both for the remembrance of Central Avenue and communities and people affected largely by its demise. This documentary provides an engaging platform to present my research as a thoughtful and provoking way to "illuminate, revive, and reconstruct these lost histories" (Rodriguez & Baber, 2007, p. 64). In addition, by composing this research through film assists the communication discipline to move beyond its use of film as a trivialized teaching aid and understand it as a mode of identity formation (Ruby, 1996) that is ripe for analysis in research.

Between April 2016 and May 2017, 15 on-camera interviews were conducted at various locations across the Tampa Bay region and one in Sanibel Island. Of the 15 interviews, nine interviews were with black residents who lived in Tampa during the 1960s. The residents had varying degrees of interaction with the civil rights movement in Tampa as activists, city employees, and students involved in integration. The mixture of individuals, while not expansive of everyone critically involved in the movement, produces inextricable links to the varying storylines embedded throughout the film. The identification and selection of these individuals is discussed in the next chapter. The other six people interviewed in the film are a variety of historians who provide understanding of Central Avenue and Tampa during the 1960s alongside the national and historical context necessary to situate Tampa's story within the larger national civil rights narrative.

The first seven interviews were transcribed beginning in December 2016. As future interviews were conducted, they were transcribed upon completion. The narrative arch of the story was outlined beginning in March 2017. Sound bites were then organized to fit the central themes discussed in the film. This process was outlined as a papercut to provide a working draft of the story before the video editing began. The papercut helps formulate the story and provides guidance for specific visual images to include in the project. This process was completed in late April 2017 and submitted to my dissertation committee chair on May 9, 2017.

During the first few months of 2017, archival work was completed in the USF library through newspaper microfilm and special collections papers from Cody Fowler and Robert Saunders as well as in the Robert W. Saunders, Sr. Public Library for newspaper clippings and other documents related to Central Avenue, Progress Village, and a FDLE investigation into Chambers' death. Online resources and photographs were gathered through the Burgert Brothers



Figure 4: This photograph shows the camera viewfinder in the foreground during the on-camera interview with K. Stephen Prince on July 17, 2016. It provides a look at the visual aesthetics created during the production of the film. Photo courtesy: Ryan Watson

digital collection accessible through the Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library Cooperative, the Robertson & Fresh Collection in the USF Digital Collection, Library of Congress photographs, and various presidential libraries. Additionally, archival photographs were attained through the

Tampa Bay Times online collection and 12 photos were purchased for inclusion in the film related to the Tampa lunch counter sit-in movement that began February 29, 1960 and the four days following Chambers' death on June 11, 1967. These images were critical to the film as they provide visible depictions of the tumultuous times during the local civil rights movement that are often not included in library digital collections that focus on general life in Tampa. Finally, music and sound effects were accessed through two online resources, audioblocks.com and jinglepunks.com, to provide the audible movement to the film.

The visual editing was completed using the Adobe Premiere Pro software. This process began in late April 2017 and concluded June 9, 2017 on the eve of the first public screening of the film. On June 10, 2017, more than 200 people attended a film screening hosted at the Robert W. Saunders, Sr. Public Library. The event was co-sponsored by the Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists (TBABJ) as a local event that was part of a national event called "Inspire Black Men" to encourage future development of black journalists. Following the screening of the 54-minute film, a panel discussion included Senator Arthenia Joyner, lunch counter sit-in organizer Clarence Fort, and Dayle Greene, who was the first black television news anchor in Tampa in the 1970s. This event was the culmination of the film project portion of my dissertation and is discussed further in chapter four as a reflexive look back at the film, its creation, and purpose.

Chapter 4:

Making the Film

The outline for this documentary follows the lead of *Seizing Justice*. That film begins and ends in the Smithsonian Museum where the Woolworth's lunch counter from Greensboro is part of a public memorial display to educate the present about the past. Likewise, my film begins and ends in Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, which through its re-dedication in 2016 historicizes Central Avenue in the space it once occupied and includes text and images that tell a partial history. Thus, the film offers the park as a present perspective to provide a full-circle beginning and end of the story. The bulk of analysis is then situated in the middle as roughly a chronological outline that challenges the power dynamic in Tampa through a wide range of injustices faced by blacks in Tampa. The primary points of discussion in the film are the formation of segregation in the United States and Tampa, the rise and history of Central Avenue, the construction of the bi-racial committee, the 1960 lunch counter sit-in, integration of public facilities and schools, Chambers' death and the subsequent physical damage to the areas in and around Central Avenue in 1967, the role of urban renewal and interstate construction on the physical removal and relocation of blacks in Tampa throughout the mid- to late-1960s, and finally, the real and symbolic destruction of Central Avenue in 1974. This chapter provides a reflexive examination of the process of creating and producing the *Tampa Technique* documentary film. This chapter is divided into eight sections: (1) a brief overview of the research process and introduction of the film's participants, (2) privilege, (3) subjectivity and reflexivity, (4) examining power, (5) origin of the

“Tampa Technique,” (6) assessing Thirdspace of Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, (7) the editing process and use of visuals, and (8) the audience. Throughout this chapter, theory helps explain how decisions were made regarding how to tell this story through film and what issues and questions arose during the process.

Research and the Participants

Learning about Central Avenue was the first step in the research process. As a resident of the Tampa Bay area but not as someone who was raised in this region of Florida, I knew little about Central Avenue before reading about the Tampa riot. Therefore, I had to understand Central as a place, then as a site of remembrance, to provide a sense of its importance to Tampa’s history. It was paramount that I begin to explore Central Avenue not as a collection of businesses and people but as a “a space of collective resistance” (Soja, 1996, p. 35) that both affords and challenges a power dynamic embedded in the 1960s. Two primary sources of information provided the initial insight for Central Avenue. First, a special issue of *Practicing Anthropology* published in 1998 explores Central Avenue as a site of public heritage to provide foundational and historical understanding of various aspects of black life in Tampa (Greenbaum, 1998). Second, *Central Avenue Remembered* is a documentary televised by WEDU in 2007 that highlights Central Avenue as a site of cultural heritage intersecting business owners, musical history, and people. The documentary was useful in understanding its significance to black history in Tampa but only two minutes of the film introduce the civil rights movement, the 1967 riot, urban renewal, and interstate construction. Therefore, the film does not expand on these complex social and political factors. I was moved to pick up on those few minutes as the focus of *Tampa Technique* to understand how these various forces complicated and removed Central Avenue as a place and site of racial formation. Thus, *Tampa Technique* became about

acknowledging “our power, both collective and individual, to transform the meaning of race” (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 16) in Tampa within the context of U.S. history.

Following this initial research during two weeks in April 2016, meetings and pre-interviews were conducted to gain personal insight and understanding of Central Avenue. First on April 14, Tampa Bay History Center curator Rodney Kite-Powell provided historical context as well as suggested interviewees for the project. This was the first time I learned of Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, so I visited the park after that meeting to gain a sense of the space that Central Avenue previously occupied. Second on April 15, University of South Florida archivist and assistant librarian Andy Huse provided additional names to consider for interviews and outlined significant archival material available in the USF library. Third and very influential on April 26, a meeting with Cheryl Rodriguez sparked the idea to move this project beyond those few days in June 1967 to a documentary that discusses and promotes Central Avenue as a site of change and contestation, both historically and in the present. Dr. Rodriguez is the director for the Institute on Black Life at USF and a former resident of East Tampa with a wide breadth of historical and personal knowledge of Central Avenue. Her father, Francisco Rodriguez, was the lead attorney for the NAACP during this tumultuous time in Tampa. That meeting also began to shape my understanding of the significance of this story as a journey of both history and memory, but it also was the first time I was confronted with the challenge as a white filmmaker to tell the story of this historical and racialized community and space. This topic is discussed in the chapter’s following sections on privilege, subjectivity, and reflexivity.

Fourth on April 27, a meeting with K. Stephen Prince resulted in additional insight for the project. The USF associate professor of history taught a course in the spring 2016 semester that explored the Robert W. Saunders papers in the USF library to uncover new information

regarding Saunders' time as Florida's field secretary for the NAACP from 1952-1966. Additionally, Dr. Prince is a published historian regarding the U.S. south from the Civil War through Jim Crow segregation, so his expertise is invaluable to contextualize the film beyond Tampa. Finally, on the afternoon of April 27, a meeting with Fred Hearn provided the final push to produce *Tampa Technique* well beyond the isolated event of Chambers' death. Hearn, who offers historical tours of Tampa and volunteers at the Robert W. Saunders library, said during that meeting, "We need to celebrate Central Avenue... (because) a lot of good can come from this" (F. Hearn, personal communication, April 27, 2016). Hearn provided additional suggestions for interviews, historical documents, and personal perspective during a visit to Perry Harvey, Sr. Park. These meetings within a two-week span of time solidified the need to move the project into a deeper methodological and theoretical approach to analyze Central Avenue's rise and demise.

During the summer months, data was gathered for historical context and understanding to identify additional people with knowledge of Central Avenue. Microfilm for all four Tampa area newspapers (*Florida Sentinel-Bulletin*, *St. Petersburg Times*, *Tampa Times*, *Tampa Tribune*) that published news stories in the 1960s were reviewed. Two specific historical moments became the central focus to provide visually engaging headlines, text, influential participants, and possible photographs to include in the documentary. First, on February 29, 1960, Tampa teenagers participated in sit-ins at the Woolworth's lunch counter to challenge segregation. These sit-ins were inspired by the original sit-in in Greensboro, North Carolina, on February 1. The news coverage identified Clarence Fort as a key leader for Tampa's sit-in movement and he would become a significant interview for the film on January 31, 2017 after multiple informal conversations. News stories in the week following February 29 were examined to collect data for

historical and contextual references. Second, newspapers were reviewed from June 11, 1967 through June 21, 1967 to gain understanding and gather material in the 10 days following Chambers' death. Chambers' funeral was June 20, so this date range provided thorough news context to these significant events in Tampa's racial history in a visual sense. In reviewing these articles, it became clear that James Hammond was a powerful and significant voice for blacks in Tampa along with NAACP leaders who unfortunately had passed before this project began.



Figure 5: Behind-the-scenes look at the interview with James Hammond on July 17, 2016 at his Tampa home. Photo courtesy: Ryan Watson.

However, Hammond is still an important figure in Tampa's black community. Therefore, he was identified as an important person to tell this complex story and was interviewed on July 17, 2016.

Throughout the fall and spring semesters, my research examined documents in the Cody Fowler and Robert W. Saunders papers available in the USF library through special collections. These personal papers offer different content beyond traditional news media information and provide significant insight into the working of the bi-racial committee and the NAACP beginning from the committee's formation in 1959 and the innerworkings of Tampa's racial scene through the 1967 flashpoint moment, urban renewal, and interstate construction. These papers offer insight into how Tampa attempted to integrate strategically through a perspective that is rarely seen beyond the library. Additionally, connections were made with additional interviewees for the project. Documents in these collections identify that Hammond served as Tampa's director for the Commission on Community Relations and was present in the aftermath of Chambers' death and assisted in regaining peace in the streets through his leadership with the "White Hats," who were black teenagers who aided the police in patrolling the Central Avenue area. Archie Williams was a member of the "White Hats" and we connected through Hammond's current business project at Tampa-Hillsborough Action Plan. Williams was later interviewed on January 19, 2017 interviewed for the film.

During the collection of news articles and to contextualize the role of media in the shifting public landscape of the civil rights movement, two journalism historians were interviewed at the American Journalism Historians Conference in St. Petersburg in October 6, 2016 to provide context about the role and influence of journalism during the 1960s, especially the contrasting styles of the white mainstream press and the underfunded, yet socially significant, black press. Earnest Perry from the University of Missouri and Kimberley Mangun from the University of Utah provide a small part of the overall story related to Central Avenue but offer significant insight into the varying role of journalists during the civil rights movement. In

reflecting on my former role as a journalist and beginning to assess the role of media as an outsider, the work of Stuart Hall resonates in how media constructs public knowledge often in favor of the white public. Much like race as a social construction, Hall (1978) explains that media's role is a "process of 'making an event intelligible'" (p. 55) through selection and salience. Therefore, to avoid a narrow examination of Tampa, Central Avenue, and civil rights, the film needed greater contextualization of how the city responded to isolated national events such as police violence in Alabama and school integration in Little Rock that were perpetuated by national media and examine how the city used these moments to respond locally. The visual images included in the film from journalistic accounts are discussed in this chapter.

During the spring 2017 semester, the remaining interviews were conducted along with additional archival research to identify as many images to include in the final visual representation of Central Avenue. It was during this semester that it became evident one key voice was missing from the story. Black female perspectives were not yet part of the story. This was not by design but more by first identifying the mediated key figures during the civil rights movement. As I learned throughout the project and research, black females are the most marginalized standpoint yet are integral in the civil rights movement within leadership and activist roles. Collins (1986) explains that "since the civil rights and women's movements, Black women's ideas have been increasingly documented and are reaching wider audiences" (p. S16). However, that public forum was not as accessible and publicized during the early formation of the movement. Therefore, it was significant to include prominent female leaders during the 1960s in Tampa and researchers who can contextualize seminal moments to help shape the story and ensure that audiences see and hear how black female leadership was and remains a significant voice.

Following a tour with Fred Hearn on February 11, 2017 of Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, Doretha Edgecomb and Arthenia Joyner were identified as two prominent women involved in the story of Central Avenue and civil rights. Both are connected to the sit-in movement



Figure 6: Fred Hearn (red shirt) guides walking tours of Perry Harvey, Sr. Park and is a Central Avenue historian. Photo courtesy: Travis Bell.

organized by Fort. Edgecomb's husband, George Edgecomb, who would later become Hillsborough County's first black judge, was the student council president at Middleton High School who met with Fort to recruit students to participate. Joyner was a student at Middleton and joined the sit-ins. Additionally, Joyner's father, Henry Joyner, owned the Cotton Club, which was the last black-owned business to close on Central Avenue in 1974. Their participation in the film was crucial to contextualize the story both through personal connections and their respective involvement in the integration of schools as well as future leadership on the school board (Edgecomb) and in the state legislature (Joyner). Both women were interviewed on March

23, 2017. Three other women, Beverly Ward, Chloe Coney, and Rodriguez were interviewed between March 1, 2017 and April 11, 2017. Ward and Coney were each identified through my advisory role and participation in the USF Institute on Black Life. Ward is an environmental anthropologist who studies the effects of urban renewal and interstate construction throughout the South and has extensively studied Central Avenue. Liz Dunham works in the Institute on Black Life and mentioned Coney during an informal conversation as a key person to meet. Coney is the founder of the Corporation to Develop Communities of Tampa and was one of the select black students who participated in the initial integration of schools in Hillsborough County in 1963. Rodriguez was interviewed during the fall semester but due to technical issues she was re-interviewed to ensure proper quality to match the rest of the interviews in the film.

The final two people interviewed for the film were critical in countless ways. Steven Lawson is a retired history professor at Rutgers University who worked at USF from 1972-1992. He wrote a book chapter in 1982 titled “From Sit-In to Race Riot” that became a foundational text for the documentary. After speaking with him by phone, it was discovered that he was in Florida on vacation. On March 9, 2017, Dr. Lawson was interviewed in Sanibel Island. His research and knowledge about the 1960s in Tampa provide significant importance to this project. The final interview with Frank Gray was conducted on May 15, 2017. His involvement in the project, while very late in the editing process, rounded out the story better than expected. He was identified while conducting research at the Saunders library thanks to librarian Jessica Miller, who mentioned a previous oral history interview with Gray, who was the first officer on the scene after Chambers was shot. His patrol beat was Central Avenue. He not only became a key figure as the one person on the scene during that key moment in 1967 but also grew up in Tampa and added ideal reflections of Central Avenue during its rise and demise.

As outlined in this section, each of the participants in the story provide unique standpoints related to Central Avenue or contextualizing it during the 1960s. Without any of these individuals, the documentary film would not provide the amount of depth, context, and personal connection to provide as holistic a perspective as was produced in the 54-minute film. Therefore, I consider these participants as collaborators in constructing the film by connecting key people, images, and moments to center the film around and were integral throughout the entire production process (Rose, 2016). The challenge became how to condense over 10 hours of on-camera interviews into a story that weaves so many complex topics into a cohesive story.

Privilege

Privilege and understanding its role in society plays an integral role in how this documentary unfolded. Through awareness, recognition, and willingness to grapple with privilege, I began this project knowing that a challenge for me was as a white filmmaker to produce a story about Central Avenue. Rather than avoiding this challenge, I embraced the opportunity through a consistent and concerted effort to channel the story by and through the standpoint of people who lived the story and produce it for the community in which I am not entrenched, but one that I felt strongly needed its story told and I was the one chosen to tell it. The film is not my story but it reflects my interpretation of this story, with all the potential pitfalls of privileged bias that I had to navigate, as told by individuals whose background, history, memory, and race are different from mine. Therefore, the goal of the film by recognizing and struggling with tensions created by my privilege, yet utilizing it to gain access to share the story through media and other public forums, hopes to avoid what DiAngelo (2011) defines as “ideological racism” (p. 61) where white imagery is constructed as positive against negative

images of non-whites. Instead, the story evolves into a positive image of black life in Tampa and the struggle against the ideology of white privilege.

Privilege is a concept that was foreign to me before graduate school. I have come to understand that is how privilege works, especially white privilege. Until confronted by the notion of privilege, it can be blinding. My early studies engaging and unpacking whiteness help illuminate this awareness and raise personal consciousness of recognizing privilege for all its complexities and challenges. Following my conversations with Rodriguez and Hearn during the pre-production phase of the project, I realized that my privilege and whiteness is clearly visible and could be a barrier if not openly and honestly discussed as to my desire to produce the film and recurring questions surrounding for whom I am producing the film and why.

Throughout the film project, it was evident that the civil rights movement was an affront to privilege and became a central theme that the film must try to comprehend and deliver that



Figure 7: Photograph with Clarence Fort following our January 31, 2017 interview. Fort organized the Tampa lunch counter sit-in in 1960. Photo courtesy: Ryan Watson.

message to anyone watching. It was about challenging a system that forced the movement because “white people are not required to explain to others how ‘white’ culture works, because ‘white’ culture is the dominant culture that sets the norms. Everybody else is then compared to that norm” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 21). As I examined documents for this film and constructed questions for interviews, assessing how to question and discuss privilege was significant to show how privilege was working from the white civic leaders and juxtapose how that perception looked through the writing of black leaders and memory of people who experienced it. Recognizing that privilege was visible to black leaders in significant areas of housing, education, and politics that was controlled and maintained through access and wage inequality is imbedded in the film. Even the idea that a few white business owners occupied space on Central Avenue provides an opportunity to discuss how privilege was prevalent in black spaces (Shircliffe, 2006) forced by and circulated through segregation.

One final assessment of privilege in telling this story centers around access, both to equipment for production and to spaces to publicly screen and ultimately distribute the film. Producing a full-length documentary film is costly, both financially and with time. I recognize that my access and privilege offer me a unique space and opportunity to produce and distribute this story that might not be afforded to a person of color. Thanks to a friendship with my fellow instructor Ryan Watson, we had access to a drone, multiple cameras, memory cards, and lighting equipment that would cost thousands of dollars to begin any type of documentary film project. However, the goal with this kind of access was to ensure that the story of Central Avenue could serve as a lifelong reflection of the significance of this place and to avoid pitfalls of the film industry that Hughey (2009) explains through a white dominant leadership structure reifies perceived colorblind stories that “still transmits the ideology of white supremacy and

normativity” (p. 550). While producing this film, I was reading *True South* written by Jon Else, who was the series producer for the PBS 10-part documentary series *Eyes on the Prize*. Those films focus on the historically significant moments that are often circulated about the civil rights movement, but it provided insight into identifying lost narratives to provide different standpoints related to these moments. As I reflect on the production of *Tampa Technique*, I attempted to recognize and use my privilege as filmmaker through an emphasis to “take a deep journey back in time with men and women who had been waiting years to tell their tale” (Else, 2017, p. 161). Therefore, through my privileged access to equipment and time to tell this story, my personal journey became one of doing justice to a story that was buried mostly in memory that needed to be moved forward to the present so our community can garner a greater understanding for how privilege worked in the past and how it continues to work economically, politically, socially, and systematically in favor of whites.

Subjectivity and Reflexivity

While grappling with the tension of privilege to construct this film, the storytelling concept of subjectivity and the notion of reflexivity were also ever-present “as a starting point, challenging the traditional objectivist and rationalist views of inquiry” (Steier, 1991, p. 1) while recognizing that I am “in no way existent apart from my involvement” (p. 1) in the process of constructing a story both as a researcher and participant as a filmmaker. These two roles do not co-exist independent of each other, but instead work reflexively together to “understand social systems in ‘other’ cultures by understanding their organization and meaning-creating processes” (Steier, 1991, p. 3). It was important to recognize the circular process of meaning-making of the story of Central Avenue as understood and told by residents and my interpretation of what the story means and how to tell it through film.

Subjectivity is a term that I struggled with throughout the project, impeded mostly by the embedded journalistic ideology of objectivity rooted in my previous career as a broadcast journalist. Through this journalistic lens, I understood objectivity was portrayed in storytelling through my writing of text and the subjective perspective was reserved for the interviews. However, during this project, those normative silos of distributing ideas was challenged. Mindich (1998) describes that objectivity in journalism is “made difficult by its slippery nature” (p. 6) full of bias, affiliation, and time restraint. I recognized these concerns and attempted to reflect on them throughout the construction of the film while remaining aware of my privilege in the process as the definitive storyteller.

Documentary film offers a different space if subjectivity is recognized and moved to the forefront of a story. After finally releasing the stranglehold of objectivity on my approach to telling the story of Central Avenue and civil rights in Tampa, I was moved to gather a wide range of standpoints to offer a counter-memory of what is understood regarding Tampa’s racialized history that hopes to use the power of documentary film to question whether the civil rights efforts in Tampa achieved the socially accepted ideology of efficient racial justice (Hoerl, 2007). This is where Haraway’s (1998) idea of collective and embodied accounts provide a space for subjectivity that can shift agency to the standpoint of people who lived the story and can provide a greater sense of what life was like beyond the newspaper headlines and broadcast stories that offer only a small perspective.

It is through a community-based approach to telling this story where the subjective re-telling and remembrance of the story of Central Avenue and civil rights in Tampa encounters two important points to consider. First, as Bird and Ottanelli (2017) explained during their community-based research of remembering the Asaba massacre in Nigeria, “we had to negotiate

the complexities of being ‘outsiders’ who nevertheless want and need to work closely with the community” (p. 159). The authors note the importance to recognize potential problems in re-telling African history from a white, Western perspective. Thus, active and consistent engagement with the community aids in moving beyond outsider status. However, the second point of consideration is making clear that their research was guided by scholarship, “not by any prescribed community agenda” (p. 160). This is not to say that research cannot be subjectively produced, but it is to say that grounding this approach in relevant theory and methodological rigor rather than simply supporting a cause is necessary. Therefore, recognizing these two important points allows subjective stories to be shared by community members and corroborated through quality research that ultimately can serve as an accurate intervention guided by collaborative efforts both by and for community members and researchers.

It was at this point in the process that the original decision to exclude any form of verbal narration from the film’s final product was cemented. This decision was two-fold. First, use of written text presented by a narrator begins to bleed into the old ideology of journalism to weave the “facts” of a story through writing and blend it with the subjective standpoint of interviews. Keeping in mind the potential challenge as an outsider from Bird and Ottanelli, I did not want that written interference for the film because of the influence of standpoint theory on the initial approach to this project and a desire to maintain a community-based approach to the film. Additionally, an “authoritative” voice deflects away from the agency created through a story guided by first-person accounts. Bruzzi (2006) describes voiceover narration as “the unnecessary evil of documentary” (p. 48) that can interfere with a story through an often white, male perspective. Second, the question becomes who could or should serve as the narrator to generate a professional aesthetic quality to the film while also providing a voice that resonates with and

reflects Central Avenue and Tampa's movement. I cannot definitively say there is not a viable person who could reflect these ideals and relate well to Central Avenue's story. Instead, this was a stylistic decision based on months of reflecting on whose story is being told and by whom. I ultimately wanted the story to feel as much like a first-person account as possible with enough context (through diligent research and scholarship) to guide the story but keep it authentic to the stories and archival material available to visually show what was happening.

Thus, reflexivity is paramount to navigate concerns and questions of accuracy, authenticity, bias, positionality, personal and political beliefs, privilege, and subjectivity, plus countless other hurdles, that should remain evident throughout the entire research process and construction of the "finished" product that will continue to evolve even after it is completed (Berger, 2015). Within this project, reflexivity helps center the process/product paradox around the tension of being a white filmmaker telling the story of a black community whose story is the foundation of its existence, both in past memory and present remembrance. As Steier (1995) indicates, reflexivity should not be a "stopping point" at the conclusion of a process. Instead, as expressed earlier, reflexivity should be a starting point to create space for open dialogue around the varying positions and tensions that require reflexivity to be ever-present in the process. In the creation of *Tampa Technique*, reflexivity is especially pertinent to voice and space.

First, the notion of voice is important to understand as to whose voice is being heard and how these voices are constructed. Specific to whose voice is being heard, it is consistently a combination of participant and filmmaker. The actual voice and remembrance comes from the participants in the film, but it is the collective voice that is more specific to the filmmaker through the editing process as a way of navigating personal stories of reflection and remembrance of Central Avenue into the complex narrative of civil rights on the local and

national level. However, the depth of voices shifted throughout the process by negotiating the ever-present tension of whiteness, not directly in the film but more in the evolving relationship between filmmaker and participant as a process of acceptance. Thus, our orientation to and with each other became one of community collaborators in an on-going way to recognize and challenge whiteness that best ensures whose voice is truly being heard in the film. These tensions create a struggle as part of the reflexive process as a filmmaker, researcher, and evolution into a member and participant in constructing the community narrative through developing relationships. This constant evolution speaks to Steier's (1995) assessment of reflexivity that it is "relational-in-a-context" (p. 64) that shape and reshape how stories can be told by and through new frames of reference. This context re-forms during each step of the process and influences how the documentary is edited, yet new context enters the reflexive understanding of the importance of the film during and after the film screening through further dialogue that emerges from viewing the film.

Specific to filmmaker voice and avoiding narration, it is recognized that my work in the story construction and editing of visuals provides a space where my voice interjects throughout the story, despite no audible recognition of real voice. This determination speaks to Bell's (2011) distinction between personal and epistemological reflexivity. First, for personal reasons, it was significant to avoid including myself in the film, while recognizing that I am always part of the film, as a white filmmaker telling a story of a black space and experience (Tomaselli, 1993). The dichotomy of "self" and "other" is not lost on this racial distinction and difference. Through a desire to forge a collaborative ethnographic exploration, I hope I avoided concerns beyond the personal acknowledgement of my role as filmmaker and working tirelessly to provide a safe space for interaction to share in the story of Central Avenue. This self-reflexivity pairs with

epistemological reflexivity to ensure the story comes through participants and creates an additional reflexive space for community members to engage in and contribute to constructing knowledge through stories shared in and through the film, and by extension, how the story is received by those viewing and interpreting the film based on their knowledge of Central Avenue. As discussed in chapter three, it is a navigated process of selecting representatives to tell a story that provides partial truths embedded within a larger narrative of civil rights.

Throughout all the interviews and archival work, reflexivity helped deal with an underlying tension of “documentary as a perpetual negotiation between the real event and its representation” (Bruzzi, 2006, p. 14) to understand that the real and its presentation are independent of each other yet interconnected when gathered and analyzed collectively. My understanding was that when the film was complete, it allows a space for reflection and interpretation that is unique to each participant in the film (e.g., interviewees, filmmaker, audience) and offers a mode of critique to think differently for each viewer (Stanczak, 2011). Additionally, working with Ryan Watson on the project offered an additional participant in a space for reflexivity. As a black male who is also not from the Tampa Bay area, I relied often on conversations with him to discuss the interviews before and after they were complete, the visual tone of the interviews, the story composition, and how to connect varying perspectives, images, and music to tell a story that was authoritative in unpacking complex social and historical topics that could be digestible for anyone regardless of lived experiences. Recognizing subjectivity and privilege in constructing the story grapples with a tension as producer of images and a story and affects how that struggle conveys an intended relationship between the visual images and the viewer (Stanczak, 2007). Ultimately, reflexivity guided this project to offer a unique form of “constructing experience” (Steier, 1991, p. 9) of community remembrance through film.

Examining Power

This film is about Central Avenue and the collective impact of the Civil Rights Movement on the physical space as well as people who occupy that space. However, after reviewing countless documents, conducting interviews, and researching topics such as film, race, and memory, *Tampa Technique* in the end analyzes the assumed, lived and reported hegemonic struggle across varying standpoints. Hall (1978) describes one cultural pitfall as a reliance on one mass mediated account of seminal events that becomes a “‘consensual’ viewpoint” (p 55) across society that assumes everyone has equal access to a share of power. A brief examination of mediated reports of the lunch counter sit-ins and Chambers’ death and the ensuing days that follow was clear that power was not shared, not equal, and certainly not viewed through media reports as culturally or socially accepted as normative. Instead, the leading viewpoints in the mainstream press voiced concerns and plans from the white power structure of government, police, and military, while only acknowledging black leadership concerns in the aftermath rather than as a lead-in to major systematic problems. These mediated accounts offer visual points of reference to illuminate how the struggle for power was real but not realistic through a whiteness lens. Conversely, media reports from the *Florida Sentinel-Bulletin* offer a necessary form of counter memory in the hope to make sense of how Tampa viewed civil rights or lack thereof during the 1960s. To avoid viewing media reports as *the* only account of black life in Tampa, which reinforces whiteness that “makes its presence felt in black life, most often as terrorizing imposition, a power that wounds, hurts, tortures” (hooks, 2014, p. 87), accessible records of black leaders and interviews with citizens who participated in the movement for equality attempts to reinterpret whiteness through a black image to avoid the socialized process of

whiteness that imagines this normative thinking as representing goodness rather than inflicting suffering and inequality.

The process of retracing and reliving these moments of cultural trauma is a risk to participants in this project, but the space for counter memory through film can positively influence a political landscape and possibly shift power. By grappling with previously incapacitating pasts, “films provide resources for shared remembrance that offer social lessons about the role of the past and its implications for the present” (Hoerl, 2007, p. 71). Looking back at the role of power specific to Tampa, the film attempts to avoid elevating the white power structure as the leader in the local civil rights struggles. Instead, through the interviews and who is recognized as key figures in the movement, white men such as bi-racial committee chairman Cody Fowler, Mayor Julian Lane, and Governor LeRoy Collins are identified on multiple occasions as helpful in the movement from positions of power who were willing participants in aiding the movement but that decisions precipitated by these individuals often focus on how their involvement impacts Tampa and Florida from an economic and political standpoint. Therefore, it is paramount throughout the film to ensure that these men are not elevated to a status of “white savior” but who are discussed for their respective roles at varying times for at least addressing questions that strike at whiteness as normative. The mention of these men is not to reinforce the white power structure but to offer a space to interpret how the collective black movement represented “a radical challenge to explicit white supremacy” (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 162) that exposed a system based on racial formation that forced a response to acknowledge inequality that was clear to a group without access to individual power.

Two sites of black life in Tampa provide the landscape to examine power in Tampa throughout the film. Central Avenue is the overarching place that remains consistent because it

constitutes a site where all black residents could relate to each other and come to depend on for livelihood and social gathering outside of home. It represents the economic and cultural hub. However, it is necessary to recognize that this space was constructed through white supremacy to wield privilege and power through segregation.

Schools are the other sites to examine power. While originally researching storylines to explore in the film, segregated education and long-term opportunity became an inextricable link. I was aware of the influence of Blake and Middleton high schools during my time in television through reporting on the schools' football rivalry. However, as I read about both schools closing



Figure 8: Left, students in a Blake High School classroom. Right, newspaper staff at Middleton High School. Photo courtesy: Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System.

in 1971 as all-black school converted to middle schools, it was necessary to include the role of each school in the struggle for power in Tampa. Integration of Hillsborough County schools was legally challenge in 1958, selectively implemented in 1963, and was forced to fully integrate following the closing of Blake and Middleton. The county's plan was hailed by media as a model for other districts and by legal scholars for its implementation by law (Days, 1992), but as Shircliffe (2006) describes "beneath this image lies another story" (p. 9) of community loss. Like

Central Avenue, school closures increased economic instability for school administrators, influenced displacement and re-segregation through suburbanization and urban renewal, and the reopening of both schools with a goal of racial balance fueled by magnet school rules to control white involvement in the schools through select programs kept many neighborhood residents from attending the schools that could reassert the cultural value that was lost when each school closed. The names for each school were restored when Blake re-opened in 1997 and Middleton returned in 2002, but the symbolic significance of each new school location could not replicate the social significance of what each school meant before and during integration as a space to negotiate and examine power.

The “Tampa Technique”

One fundamental challenge for this film is identifying and seeing sites of struggle for power. As the previous section outlines, Central Avenue and schools offer the physical locations to examine how power directly impacted racialized spaces in Tampa, but these spaces are limited compared to many Southern cities like those witnessed in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia and Mississippi, which are embedded in the nationally recirculated master narrative of civil rights. That challenge for imagery from a lack of visible sites of conflict creates a premise of the film both in name and in process. Therefore, an explanation of the “Tampa Technique” is necessary to understand why and how this film attempts to tell the story through an underlying and embedded philosophy by the city’s elite to control the pace and progress of integration.

The “Tampa Technique” is a negotiated process spearheaded by the 12 members of the bi-racial committee along with the mayor to navigate integration and avoid what would eventually come in the form of federal legislation to force integration through the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Lawson (1982) describes the mission of the six

white committeemen “as encouraging equal opportunity rather than imposing racial integration” (p. 263) and that the black committeemen “complemented” those views. That language is indicative that ultimately the white members formed a primary voice in the process but conceded some ways of approaching integration. Therein lies the tension that Tampa faced as a perceived progressive city in the New South with an emphasis on how to navigate economic growth built on a burgeoning tourism industry. The need from the city was to maintain a vision for Northern visitors that Tampa was not a place burdened by the mediated Jim Crow South but instead offered a safe space for outsiders.

Tampa was not alone in its desire to avoid the crushing blow of segregation on the city’s identity. Behnken (2007) describes the “Dallas Way” as a cooperative and peaceful process of integration in Dallas, Texas that belies that of the mediated violent identity of Southern whites during civil rights. He compared Dallas to the civility of Greensboro, Atlanta’s motto as a “city too busy to hate,” and the formation of bi-racial committees in Tampa, Houston, Texas, and Columbia, South Carolina. It is important to note how cities attempted to integrate through nonviolent means, but research cannot underscore the impact of governmental control in the process. Debated as altruistic or selfish, it is necessary to realize that the goal was about public accommodation not social acceptance. City leaders, often with the aid of media, reinforce whiteness that is difficult to see because it “is not a fixed property” (Nakayama, 2000, p. 364) but works through dominant processes to secure social positions constructed by groups such as the bi-racial committee.

Tampa Technique explores the role of the bi-racial committee both for its progressive ideals but also unpacks the adverse cultural, economic, historical, and social effects it created. The term “Tampa Technique” is catchy and appears periodically in documents uncovered for use

in the film. While the technique applies to the Civil Rights Movement, the term is used primarily to describe the lunch counter sit-ins and the riot. Lawson (1982) describes the nearly six-month gap between the February 29, 1960 sit-in and the “carefully developed plan” (p. 267) to integrate

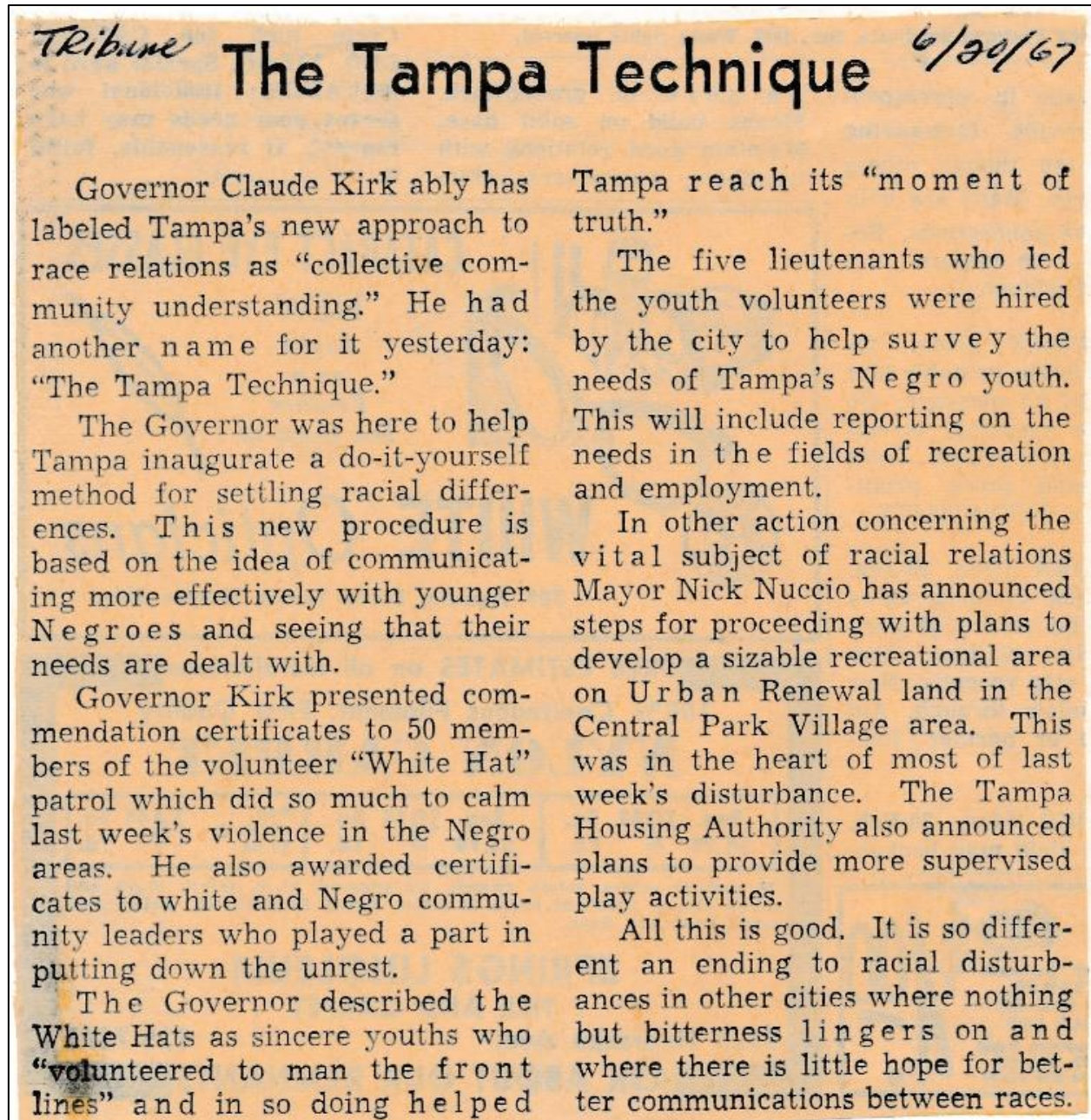


Figure 9: *Tampa Tribune* article from June 20, 1967. Governor Claude Kirk is credited with naming "The Tampa Technique" as a "collective community understanding" of race relations.

dining establishments on September 14, 1960, which set in motion the bi-racial committee's implementation of the "Tampa Technique" to quietly control public segregation. The term's origin is unclear but it appears in 1967 media reports and city documents surrounding the riot in

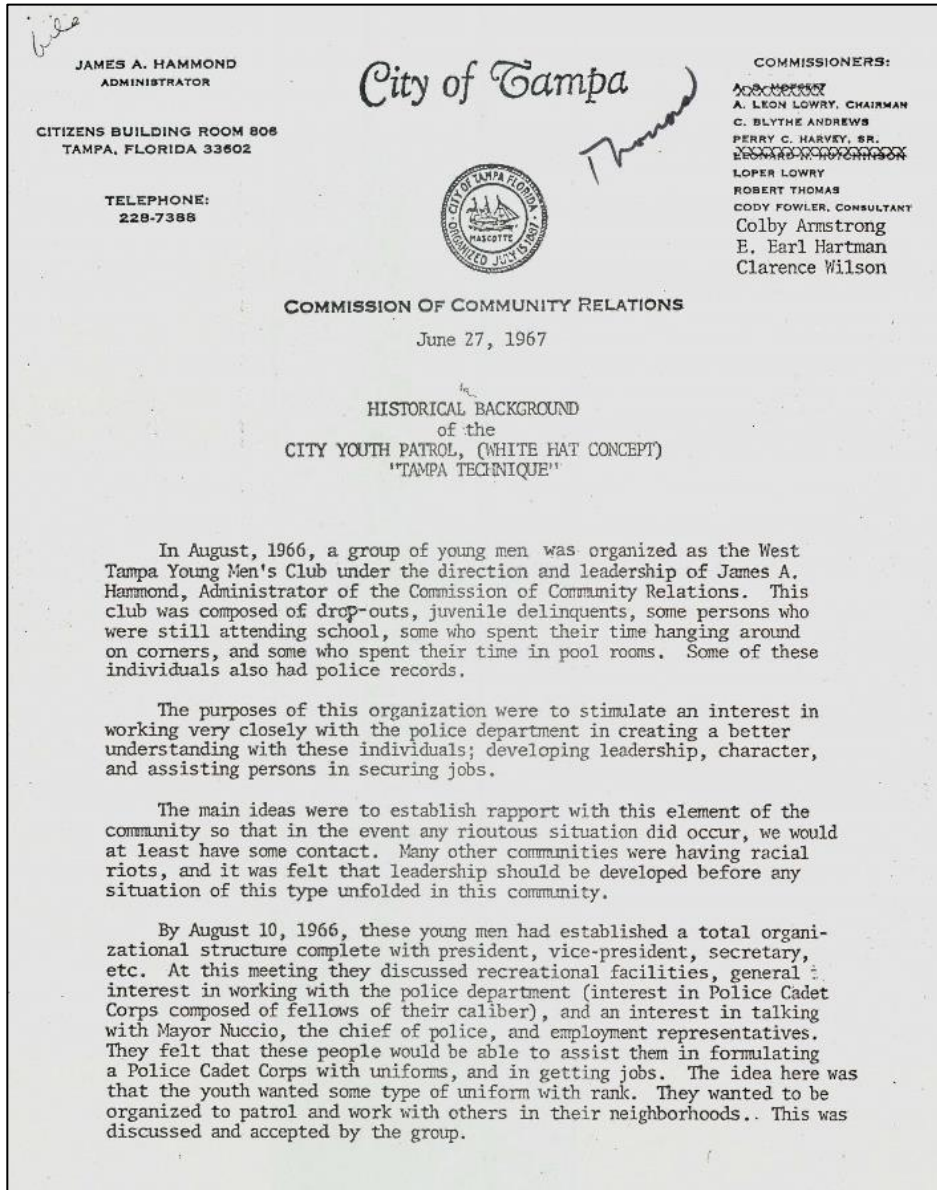


Figure 10: First of five-page letter from James Hammond providing historical context of "White Hats" and the "Tampa Technique." Courtesy: The Civil Rights Papers of Cody Fowler and Steven F. Lawson, USF Special Collections.

conjunction with the formation of the "White Hats." In a June 20, 1967 newspaper article, the *Tampa Tribune* attributes the term to Florida Governor Claude Kirk labeling "Tampa's new approach to race relations as 'collective community understanding'" with a goal of better communication with black youth to deal with their needs. A week later it appears

in a five-page letter from James Hammond as the director of the Commission on Community Relations titled “Historical Background of the City, Youth Patrol (White Hat Concept), ‘Tampa Technique’” that outlines a year-long process started in 1966 to create a youth patrol board to discuss issues brought forward by the board’s black youth leadership to discuss with city leaders. This entire history is not explicitly defined in the film, but it is discussed at length to outline the negotiated, methodical approach that Tampa forged during civil rights.

Using “Tampa Technique” as the name for the film highlights the complex back story for Tampa’s racial integration as outlined in this section. The film’s subtitle of “Rise, Demise, and Remembrance of Central Avenue” supports the film’s primary title with a dual purpose. It explores how the technique – in various, often subtle, ways – adversely affected Central Avenue as the economic and social epicenter of black life in the city. It also intends to bring the term to the present to examine how Central Avenue is memorialized in the public space it once occupied and raises questions of the method by which the city 50 years later offers a site at Perry Harvey, Sr. Park that grapples with the intersection of racial history and memory created by opposed, fluid, and dynamic ways of past remembrance (Phillips, 2004).

Assessing Thirdspace

As the only physical site of Central Avenue memory, Perry Harvey, Sr. Park serves as a space to create visual images for the film in the present. However, after conducting the interviews and working through the script, the park moved to a space of analysis spanning contestation, suffering, and reflection. Soja (1996) explains that “space is simultaneously objective and subjective, material and metaphorical, a medium and outcome of social life” (p. 45). Thinking of the park through Soja’s definition of space, it is a paradox of the city’s “objective” interpretation of what to include as remembrance in the park but affords space



Figure 11: Photograph from the north end of Leader’s Row at Perry Harvey, Sr. Park. The downtown Tampa skyline is in the background. Photo courtesy: Ryan Watson.

for subjective analysis of which stories and people are omitted as well as how that information can focus historical understanding of Central Avenue. The park as physical material provides visual points of reference to help understand and “see” the significance of Central Avenue, yet it can be a metaphor for black subjectivity and loss caused by federal legislation from the 1949 Housing Act and the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 that preceded the Civil Rights Act, which collectively assisted in the demise of Central Avenue. Finally, the park can provide a medium of communication and environment that highlights the civil rights movement for its positive challenge to power structures in Tampa but also the outcome of a loss of social space that was created and destroyed by white power structures. The film attempts to tackle this challenging assessment of the park as Thirdspace.

Film cannot provide a definitive answer of how best to interpret the park but the goal of this film was to avoid the trap of historical films that often “homogenize public memory” (Kaes,

1990, p. 112). Instead, the film offers the park as a space to explore a present-tense Thirdspace perspective of Central Avenue through the possibilities of “remembrance-rethinking-recovery of spaces lost” (Soja, 1996, p. 81). Since the re-interpreted park opened as this film project began, it will take time to fully assess whether the city truly wants to embrace the past of Central Avenue to help educate about this culturally and socially significant place or if the goal is simply to develop a space for new residents and businesses in the neighboring Encore! mixed-income neighborhood to utilize for enjoyment and play. The hope is the film offers contrasting standpoints related to the park’s purpose that analyzes the park as a site and form of public memory that is “both attached to a past... *and* acts to ensure a future of further remembering” (Casey, 2004, p. 17). As Senator Joyner states in the film, the park “gives them a smidgen, a little knowledge about what it was like, but they have a responsibility to read and find out and talk to people who lived during that era.” Therefore, the park can serve as a starting point to begin learning about Central Avenue but must go well beyond the park to understand it.

Editing and the Visuals

Beyond background research, identifying documents, and conducting interviews, constructing a film is about finding, developing, and presenting a composite story. Relying on ethnography and fieldwork as the method of inquiry to guide this project, Wolcott (2001) explains that, not to diminish the final product, “the critical component for inquiry, the ability to conceive, or to generate, the ideas that prompt and guide inquiry” (p. 178) is the great challenge. It is through this laborious inquisition that a story can unfold. Once the storylines were determined to include in the film to examine the “Tampa Technique” through the lens of Central Avenue, the editing process was guided by a desire for the viewer to synthesize the story of its rise, demise, and remembrance as part of the larger civil rights movement and narrative.

Based on my previous profession as a journalist, the initial source of visual imagery to use in the film comes from newspaper accounts because of journalism's role in crafting a "first rough draft of history." The question of validity and accuracy of this information can be challenged but it provides a concrete source produced by journalists who were on the ground when events unfolded, albeit through segregated representations between the white and black press. However, as my relationship with participants in the film further developed, I realized that I needed much more than newspaper recollection of key moments to discuss in the film. Through these new relationships, I gained access to non-journalistic documents that assist in offering counter-narrative moments in the film that both corroborate and conflict with the newspaper accounts available from the 1960s. These new materials (e.g., FDLE documents at the Saunders library, personal collections from Progress Village residents) increased my awareness and consciousness as a filmmaker to important storylines and moments to further develop in the film that were not available in the early stages of research.

The first sources of significant storylines in the film were the journalistic images to recount the sit-in movement, the shooting death of Chambers, its aftermath, and urban redevelopment. The role of mass media in the 1960s was overly one-sided toward the white public, especially when discussing violence through a filtered lens (Scott, 1969). Therefore, a need to examine how each of the area's newspapers reported on these tumultuous moments provides a glimpse into how Tampa navigated these moments and generates significant visual imagery to include from headlines to photographs to text within articles that substantiate or challenge stories told by the interviews in the film. It is important to move beyond the story being told by voices and add visual references that enhance what it said. The goal became to access photographs that were printed and to use the original images as standalone moments

frozen in time as a “first draft of memory” (Kitch, 2008, p. 312) to capture these seminal moments that are covered by media and often not archived through public libraries and other sources that just document general life in the city.

Two challenges arose during the search for original images printed by the newspapers beyond the use of microfilm copies. First, the *Tampa Tribune* provided the most extensive coverage through its daily publication and produced the largest number of archival photos and stories that are significant visually for the documentary. However, the paper closed on May 20, 2016 and was purchased by the *Tampa Bay Times*. Therefore, the *Tampa Tribune* archives were not readily accessible while creating the film until the final month as a few images were digitized and made available by the *Times*. Second, the *Florida Sentinel-Bulletin* does not have a digital archive available for their photographs. Additionally, a fire destroyed many of the newspaper’s original images, so access to these critical references were impossible to retrieve. Text and photographs were used in the production of the film but were limited compared to expansive reporting from the 1960s. Despite these challenges, the *Florida Sentinel-Bulletin*’s twice weekly coverage provides important journalistic reporting that runs counter to the primarily white news outlets (Mohlman, 1998) and offers sources of information for viewers of the film who are unaware of the *Sentinel-Bulletin* and its role in black life in Tampa.

Tim Rozgonyi was a valuable resource during this research phase. He is the licensing and research editor for the *Tampa Bay Times* (previously the *St. Petersburg Times* until renamed in 2012) and assisted in identifying key photographs to use from the *Times* and *Tribune* photo archives as well as securing licensing rights to use the images in the film. One concern during the research for these images is the loss of newspapers as primary sources of significant historical moments. As media transitions into a digital era, the potential for loss of documenting history

became clear as a future concern for filmmakers interested in producing stories about the past as made evident by the *Tribune* closing. However, I was fortunate to gain access to these important images to support the story of Clarence Fort leading the lunch-counter sit-ins, the military resistance and “White Hats” involvement in 1967, the only known image of Martin Chambers that is publicly accessible, and the physical destruction caused in and around Central Avenue.

Beyond newspapers, the second source for images to include in significant storylines came from library archives through the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System and the USF digital and special collections that were critical to bring the past to life and reinvigorate an accurate heritage of a significantly forgotten community largely ignored in Tampa (Rodriguez & Baber, 2007). I was pleasantly surprised to find images of black life in Tampa from Watts Sanderson Bar, Central Theater, various businesses on Central Avenue, countless photographs of teachers and students at Blake and Middleton high schools and Booker T. Washington Junior High, images of longshoremen working the shipyards, and general scenic photographs of downtown Tampa that help visually develop the segregated spaces widely discussed throughout the film. Beyond the digital archives, photographs from the Fowler/Lawson, Saunders, and anthropology collection provide images of the bi-racial committee, Robert Saunders, and parades on Central Avenue that make the story more real. This collection of photographs allows the editing process to document general facets of black life in Tampa that move the story beyond the flashpoint, mediated moments of the sit-in and riot to support the story and provide moments of reflection and remembrance of spaces that no longer exist. This approach to digging through library archives provide a “history from the bottom up” (Else, 2017, p. 85) to locate many images that highlight the vibrancy of Central Avenue and black life in Tampa.



Figure 12: Members of the bi-racial committee. Seated second from left (left to right), Cody Fowler, James Hammond, A. Leon Lowry. Standing right, Perry Harvey, Sr. Photo courtesy: The Civil Rights Papers of Cody Fowler and Steven F. Lawson, USF Special Collections.

Despite the valuable use of these images, one limitation discovered in the editing process is that these photographs only offer a select number of representations to include in the film. We are only able to “see” what is available. Therefore, the film could only show what I could find through countless hours of looking through archives and asking for personal photographs from some of the interviewees. These images offer rewards for this work but it limits the scope and depth of the film as an accurate account of “all” black life in Tampa, which is impossible to tell

through 15 interviews. However, the images brought to life through the editing process help substantiate the stories being told.

Two final important archival inquiries surround the critical impact in the story of urban redevelopment and interstate construction and its capacity to devastate communities for the sake of public transportation. The already fractured Central Avenue community continued to struggle into the 1970s with the construction of Interstates 4 and 275, and the subsequent displacement of thousands of residents. While urban renewal was celebrated by media (Lawson, 1982), these coinciding factors combined in the slow deconstruction of Central Avenue and surrounding communities for a devastating effect. To show the community's slow dissolve into memory, archival images from presidential libraries, the Florida Memory project, and documents at the Saunders library provide images to include in the film. From federal legislation to photographs of interstate construction, the film "shows" how these destructive forces divided Central Avenue, displaced residents, and reinforced the power of white government in the racial formation of Tampa embedded within the national narrative of the greater good.

Few moving images were available during the production and editing of this film. Only two physical spaces allow this film to move the story into the present. First, video of the interstate provides a modern depiction of what the community looks like as a center of mass transit. Second, and critical to the film, are images of the re-dedicated Perry Harvey, Sr. Park to publicly remember Central Avenue and its place in Tampa's history. The documentary begins and ends in the park to round out the story of Central Avenue both historically and visually. The park offers a limited reflection of Central Avenue yet the site is valuable for the film. The walking tour with Fred Hearn through the park offers important narrative transitions in the film to consistently circle the story back to the present to examine how past events are remembered in

public space. The leader's row on the north end of the park is a crucial site for visual images to include in the film. The depiction on the walls of leader's row provides visitors to the park a glimpse of business names and key figures of this lost history in Tampa. Images of people like G.D. Rogers, Robert Saunders, Moses White, and Henry Joyner help bring these men to the present despite them not being around in the present to share their story. Merging these images with stories told during the editing process allow the visuals to participate in the film. Few images exist of Central Avenue so the park provides a space to visualize what Central looked like and to learn about a few important people and moments during its heyday.

At this point it is necessary to move beyond the visuals and their role in the film to a brief discussion of my role as the writer and editor of the story presented through film. First, I must recognize the significant contribution of every participant in the film from interviewees to historians and librarians to former journalists. They each played a substantial role in helping me more fully understand the story and how to construct a narrative that is concise and as complete as possible to provide an overarching narrative of civil rights specific to Central Avenue and Tampa. However, as the final producer of what is included and excluded from the film, I am explicitly involved in controlling the final story. That weighed on me throughout the project to get the story "right" for the community and for the film to serve as a public remembrance of Central Avenue that can hopefully do something to open dialogue about this uncomfortable local history of racial discrimination and white privilege.

As outlined earlier, raising consciousness through the film, both for me and any audience, was the goal. However, I had to make choices of who to interview, what storylines to include, how the visuals provide a depiction of what is being said, and how to implement the complex and challenging theories of racial formation and whiteness to influence how I constructed the

film. By examining various political acts during the civil rights movement and bringing them to the present, I created a film that in and of itself serves as a political act and intervention into a story that is not my own, but by extension, becomes my story of interpreting these political acts and what they mean for local history. Who was interviewed in the film was the greatest challenge, and after completing the final documentary for the initial screening, I am reflexively aware that I followed a similar model of the “Tampa Technique” as a negotiation between white filmmaker and black leaders to share the story of Central Avenue. As a white filmmaker, I had to forge relationships with several individuals who serve as gatekeepers (e.g., Rodriguez, Hearn, Joyner) to the story of Central Avenue. Without their acceptance, I could not properly tell the story. That is one of the challenges in a community-based approach because it can bear consequences on the final product as well as what the film can and should accomplish.

In writing and editing the film, I had to find a balance between maintaining credibility as a researcher and filmmaker while attaining status as a community-based partner in constructing a personal, subjective narrative. In doing so, I chose to not include any white city officials because the story was more important to develop with a specific audience in mind, one whose story is basically lost in the city’s history. I used my access and privilege to tell this story because it was paramount to explain how Tampa was a racist city, and I could use this platform to make a statement that I am attempting to become an anti-racist researcher to expose systems of power and white privilege that are often not explored by white researchers. Therefore, after constructing the film, I find myself in a paradox between “self” and “other” whereby telling the story of Central Avenue serves as a shift in my role as a researcher from white filmmaker to community participant with an express goal to have this film take a stance on behalf of Central Avenue and civil rights while deconstructing what my role can become as a researcher.

The Audience

When this film project began, three goals drove its completion. The first goal was a desire to debut the film around the 50th anniversary of Martin Chambers' death as a symbolic date of remembrance for Central Avenue. Since there is no definite or fixed timeline to discuss the demise of the space, except when the Cotton Club closed as the final business in 1974, the anniversary served as a key moment of reflection to recapture and reimagine Central Avenue and the civil rights movement. The second goal was to host the first public screening at the Saunders Library because of its cultural significance to black history in Tampa. The final goal was to have the film serve as an authoritative representation of Central Avenue and the people who helped it thrive through the intersection of history and memory. The Central Avenue story had been written in various iterations but the film could provide a communal gathering of remembrance where a public presentation would share new knowledge that could not be equally represented in a printed publication (Wagner, 2007). However, the goal of authority produces risk if the story is perceived by the intended audience as a misrepresentation of the personal, contested narrative that is widely shared.

The intended audience for this first screening was anyone with a connection to Central Avenue, either through lived experiences or as an extension of the community. Whether residents, historians, people interviewed for the film, or just someone curious enough to want to learn, the hope was to produce a film through an ethnographic ideal of "*giving voice to others* while learning to mute our own, we sometimes succeed in bringing different voices into arenas where they would not otherwise be heard" (Wolcott, 2001, p. 235). I wanted to cater to an audience who had a vision of Central Avenue but might learn a new story of Central Avenue in the process. This is where the risk was involved because as a filmmaker with little previous



Figure 13: More than 200 people attended the inaugural *Tampa Technique* screening at the Robert W. Saunders, Sr. Public Library on June 10, 2017. A panel discussion followed the film screening. Photo courtesy: Travis Bell.

authority about the subject, I entered a space where feedback could have been difficult if the story did not do justice to Central Avenue and its cultural, historical, and social significance to black communities and people across Tampa. The risk was worth taking because a side goal was to engage the public in ways often hindered through academic research (Abram & Pink, 2015). The film offered a way to communicate and translate research into a public space and bring the story to life.

An unexpected public connection prior to the screening was created through the partnership with the TBABJ to co-sponsor the screening. I attended the monthly TBABJ meeting on May 6, 2017 to explain the film and ask if they would be interested in providing any media coverage to promote the June 10 screening. Through this partnership and distributing a press release to all local media (Appendix B), I had the good fortune to participate in seven media

stories (three in print, two on television, and two radio interviews) in the week leading to the screening and two television stories after the screening. More than 200 people attended the public screening on June 10, 2017. The size of the audience was tremendous but equally important was the diversity evident in the crowd. This audience reach was unforeseen but welcomed. The feedback was astonishing for me as the filmmaker as new audiences were discovered who might find a use for the film. Following the screening, panelists and audience members expressed a need for the film to reach public schools, local churches, politicians, and



Figure 14: From left, Travis Bell, panelist Senator Arthenia Joyner, panelist Clarence Fort, moderator Tammie Fields, panelist Dayle Greene. Photo courtesy: Beth Bell.

other local civic groups. Dayle Greene, who was the first black news anchor at a Tampa television station, described the film as a wonderful display of investigative journalism. The audience response was overwhelming and supportive that the film had told a comprehensive story of the rise, demise, and remembrance of Central Avenue.

Chapter 5:

Conclusion

This documentary project officially began in April 2016. However, while writing about and reflecting upon the process, this film really started to unfold during an incubation phase in the fall 2015 semester while taking an engaging ethnography course in anthropology. During that semester, I started writing what would become my first published article “Visually engaged ethnography: Constructing knowledge and critical consciousness” in the *Journal of Media Practice*. In that article, I explain the need for engaged ethnographers to utilize available visual production capabilities to assist in reaching a broader public. A few hurdles and concerns for implementation include commodification, reflexivity, and technical acumen, which I hope to have addressed in this dissertation, with the goal of collaborating in the creation of a visual product to assist in the construction of knowledge. The role of the visual product and story “can work as a transformative mode that bridges private knowledge to challenge the public to think differently” (Bell, 2016, p. 135). Documentary film produced with ethnography as its guiding force provides challenges and limitations but offers collaborative and collective rewards for the researcher and the community as I feel that *Tampa Technique* did for me and the extended Central Avenue community. This conclusion offers final thoughts on how this project worked to reach a broader public to interrogate an imperfect past but also provides future guidance of how to use both this written document and film to move the communication discipline forward.

Communicating with a Broader Public

The audience at the public screening was an immediate public that was reached to engage in constructing critical consciousness about Central Avenue and all the complexities in its demise. Identifying channels of communication with and through mass media was the mode to reach a broader public for this film that was provoked by Eriksen's (2006) concern for anthropology and its lack of public engagement. He describes how anthropology could change the world yet "is almost invisible in the public sphere" (p. 1) through a lack of willingness to embrace the potential to engage in dialogue across various forms of media to disseminate research. The communication discipline suffers a similar lack of public engagement created by the siloed nature of working in a university setting. Instead, this project hoped to use many forms of mediated communication to push the story beyond the university through traditional mass media platforms and social media.

A [Facebook page for the film](#) shared short video vignettes to provide "teasers" of the film. Additionally, the Facebook page allowed engagement with interested viewers to ask questions about the film, provided details about the first public screening, and shared links to traditional media stories produced about the film. This form of social media offered a way to share these unique media forms with viewers who either could not see a news story or hear a radio interview during its live transmission or they live outside the Tampa Bay viewing area. Facebook does have limited potential based upon who has access, but it creates a central space to provide updates about the film moving forward. Additionally, YouTube and Indiegogo are video platforms that were utilized to showcase and broadcast the video vignettes as well as generate fundraising to cover some expenses incurred during the production phase of the project. These

social media forums allow the project to reach unexpected supporters and promote the story across numerous media channels previously limited by the scope of traditional mass media.

Despite its changing role in society, mass media still provides a broad reach specific to the Tampa Bay viewing community who was the primary target market for most viewers who might be interested in *Tampa Technique*. Through a personal network of former media colleagues and new ones generated through the co-sponsorship with TBABJ, a press release (Appendix B) distributed through this network resulted in multiple on-air and online stories produced by traditional media outlets, including the [Tampa Bay Times](#), [WTSP](#), and [WTVT](#). I recognize that not all projects are designed with mass media engagement in mind or that researchers may not have direct access to local media personalities who might be interested in a project. However, trying to reach new audiences through traditional mass media engages Eriksen's challenge to enter the public sphere.

Beyond traditional media and applicable for any research project, the film's Facebook page provides an example of how to use a space to aggregate content to ensure a larger reach for people invested in the project. For this project, I was fortunate that mass media stories generated public awareness of the film, and sharing them through social media offered a new reach across social networks well beyond those created specifically for this film project. For future researchers interested in visual projects, the relative ease and affordability of creating online video "teasers" with readily accessible equipment (e.g., cell phones) capable of quality video provides new forms of public engagement only witnessed in the 21st century. These are just a few ways how communicating with a broader public allowed for better engagement with the film to intrigue new viewers who might otherwise be unaware of Central Avenue's story, its place in

Tampa's history, or the film. Therefore, social media affords a visual space for learning, knowledge construction, and critical consciousness for both a filmmaker and new audiences.

Recognizing an Imperfect Past

The day after the public screening I went to Savannah, Georgia to participate in a two-week NEH summer institute hosted by the Georgia Historical Society titled "Recognizing an Imperfect Past: History, Memory, and the American Public." I was one of 25 "students" who were a mixture of faculty members across the country. The purpose of the institute was to examine how the U.S. publicly memorializes and recognizes its historical inequality from slavery to the Civil War through Reconstruction and during the Civil Rights Movement. Before attending this event, I started to question why I was a participant in this summer institute. However, after the first week, I reflected on my project and how it fit into the conversations we had during our daily classes. I recognized at that point that *Tampa Technique* was an exploration of the intersection of history and memory and how those two can work in unison with or as contradiction to making sense of the past in the present.

David Blight is a professor of history at Yale University and was the keynote speaker. Blight (2001) explains in the aftermath of the Civil War that the U.S. embraced a "politics of forgetting" (p. 45) to sweep the racialized past of the war behind as the nation worked through reconciliation to begin its development as a global, industrial superpower. This approach to forgetting negative moments in the past resulted in future racial hatred that spawned the rise of lynching, disenfranchisement, and Jim Crow segregation. The challenge during each phase of racial oppression involved a similar politic to erasing the memory of these countless historical injustices. Cities, states, and the nation found new ways to publicly memorialize and discuss these past transgressions. Perry Harvey, Sr. Park is an example of how Tampa attempts to make

sense of this checkered history and ultimately capitalize on it as a living monument to recognize its own imperfect past. This type of memorialization helps to romanticize the history of Central Avenue and selectively remember it for all the good it brought to the black community and gloss over the story that Tampa was as Hearn describes in the film a “typical, Southern, segregated town” and Hammond bluntly explains that “Tampa was a racist city.” The film thus provides a space for a politics of remembering that can function as a form of counter memory to the publicly displayed creation of history and memory.

Two other moments in Savannah helped reinforce the importance of producing *Tampa Technique* to remember Central Avenue. First, we read *The Southern Past: A Class of Race and Memory* that introduces Hayti, which is the Central Avenue of Durham, North Carolina. During urban renewal programs of the late 1950s and early 1960s, “white power, manifest in urban renewal, threatened to radically degrade the traditionally black spaces that had sustained black community life” (p. 231). White spaces were saved, yet Hayti suffered the same fate as Central Avenue. Second, we were on a guided tour of Savannah that provided a different narrative from the typical bus tours geared toward tourists that highlight Savannah for its Southern charm, unique architectural town squares, and as the basis for the nonfiction novel *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. On this tour, we were introduced to Yamacraw, which is a low-income housing development that once was the hub of black life in Savannah with a mix like Central Avenue and the surrounding Central Park Village. The Yamacraw business district was the recipient of urban renewal and the construction of Interstate 16 that bisected the district and led to its eventual demise. Learning about Hayti and Yamacraw in the same week provided clarity for my participation in the summer institute and justification for the *Tampa Technique*

film as a necessary form of public memory that can be replicated in many other cities across the United States, especially in the South.

Moving the Discipline Forward

Through the culmination of the film and the summer institute, I realize that the communication discipline clearly has untapped multidisciplinary potential to utilize visual methods across anthropology, history, and memory studies, just to name a few, to identify best practices for how to remember the past in the present. Historical monuments and remembrances are still one-sided from a white, male perspective, yet opportunities abound to offer new forms of counter memory in public spaces or through public forums. Using theory to guide method is helpful in synthesizing a project like *Tampa Technique* that relied on the underpinning of racial formation and standpoint theories to ensure that proper context was provided from perspectives often overlooked and underutilized to make sense of our collective past.

While the film and one screening is complete, the goal must be to communicate the impact of this film on community, knowledge construction, and hopefully new levels of critical consciousness to engage broader publics to not only know the story of Central Avenue but use it when discussions surrounding urban renewal, roadway expansion, and unequal education arise. Central Avenue and civil rights in Tampa, like many other cities, offer instructive cases to talk about the impact of social and political issues that have significant cultural ramifications. Expanding similar projects across various disciplines can help develop future communication opportunities to not only produce projects like *Tampa Technique* but create a network of researchers who can collaborate on film and digital projects that offer counter narratives, new discoveries, and spaces for reflection rarely utilized in academic research.

One challenge for communication researchers in a collaborative project is to generate various translations of the research output for both academic and public audiences. This project offers a coupling of these translations and a possible template of how to deliver two distinct representations centered around the same central topic. First, the film was intended for a public audience and remembrance of Central Avenue for anyone watching to be able to comprehend the story and research output. However, it can be presented to academic audiences as a visual form of research that is translatable for a broader public. Second, this written document is intended for an academic audience to outline how theory and method were ever-present throughout the film's production. However, this text is written in a way that can be read by anyone interested in understanding some story of Central Avenue and how a film can be produced. Therefore, the two forms of text produced by this research can be read together but also can be, if needed, understood mutually exclusive of each other.

Beyond academic outlets, the goal for any communication research project should be to reach a broader public. In the case of *Tampa Technique*, five future goals are in mind. First, finding a way for the film to be used in the newly formed African and African-American history courses in Hillsborough County public schools is a short-term goal that was mentioned by several audience members following the film's first screening. Second, host multiple public screenings to engage new audiences to share the story of Central Avenue. Third, submit the film to various film festivals locally and nationally. Fourth, televise the film locally, possibly on WEDU and City of Tampa TV. Finally, create a digital space for the film and archival material that was discovered during the research for the film, as well as produce additional short video vignettes for a variety of disciplines to assess film, history, and memory. These are just a few possibilities how to move the communication discipline forward to engage a broader public.

Lastly is how this process influences me as a communication researcher. Using the notion of reflexivity helped me realize that I am – and likely always will be – striving toward becoming a more complete, polished, anti-racist researcher. I think it is impossible for anyone to ever become a complete researcher because of all the complexities and biases embedded within us. However, if we are willing to tackle these issues through difficult projects, opportunities exist to move from outsider to insider by way of new experiences (Berger, 2015) and engaged, community-based, collaborative research projects. As Frank Gray expressed in the film, *Tampa Technique* provides an important platform to remember what Central Avenue was like because “it gave young people a sense of belonging and something to strive toward,” which in the present offers a way for the past to motivate and inform us about what we can become if we work together. In a parallel and present way, this film provided a space for me as a researcher to strive toward using film as a viable method to help move myself, the communication discipline, and a community forward.

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Appendix B:

Tampa Technique Press Release

PRESS RELEASE

***TAMPA TECHNIQUE* DOCUMENTARY PREMIER SATURDAY AT ROBERT SAUNDERS LIBRARY**

USF instructor explores Tampa Civil Rights and '67 Riot

TAMPA, Fla. – *Tampa Technique: Rise, Demise, and Remembrance of Central Avenue* analyzes the strategic and calculated Civil Rights Movement in Tampa through the lens of Central Avenue. Segregation created the thriving black business district before a 1967 riot led to its physical and symbolic destruction. University of South Florida instructor Travis Bell produced the hour-long documentary as his dissertation project and the film will debut at the Robert W. Saunders Library Saturday, June 10 at 6 p.m.

The date is significant since it is the eve of the 50th anniversary of Martin Chambers' death that sparked the 1967 civil unrest. A panel discussion will follow the film screening in conjunction with the Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists. Expected panelists include Clarence Fort, who organized the 1960 lunch counter sit-in at Woolworth's, and Senator Arthenia Joyner, whose father, Henry Joyner, owned the last business on Central Avenue.

"I think when they look at what we did," Fort said, "and it's important for us to keep it in the limelight and keep it out there in front of them, so that they can see where there's struggle, there's gain, and there's no gain without struggle."

Tampa Technique explores the state's first bi-racial committee, integration of public facilities and schools, urban renewal/removal, interstate construction, and the '67 death of Chambers. The documentary begins and ends in Perry Harvey, Sr. Park to situate how Central Avenue is publicly memorialized.



"You couldn't compensate for the years of living and community and all of the goodness, the goodwill, and all that Central Avenue had brought," Joyner said. "All of that was devastated."

Bell joined the USF mass communications faculty in 2012 and this is his fourth documentary. This project is toward completion of his Ph.D. in communication. He worked as a sports anchor and multimedia journalist for 12 years, including six years at WTSP in St. Petersburg, Florida.

The event is open to the public. For interviews, video, or more information, contact Travis Bell at (727) 465-4670 or trbell@usf.edu.

Appendix C: IRB Notification

8/2/2016 Activity Details

Travis Bell | My Home | Logoff

[Home](#) [IRB Studies](#) [IACUC](#) [COI](#) [ARC Updates](#)

[IRB Studies](#) > Tampa Technique

[<< Return to Workspace](#) [< Prev](#) 1 / 8 [Next >](#)

Activity Details (Study that has never been approved is Closed)

Author:	Kelsey DiNardo (Research Integrity & Compliance)
Logged For (Study):	Tampa Technique
Activity Date:	7/8/2016 9:10 AM

[Activity Form](#) [Property Changes](#) [Documents](#) [Notifications](#)

Close Study - Never Approved Activity

- This activity will close the IRB Study and change the state to **Closed - Never Approved**.
- Any comments and/or documents entered below will show in the History Log.

Comments:
The Chair has reviewed your study and determined, "Activities described in the application are not designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge. The activities do not constitute research per USF IRB criteria; USF IRB approval and oversight are not required."

Add Documents:

Name	Description
There are no items to display	

[<< Return to Workspace](#)

https://arc.research.usf.edu/Prod/Rooms/RoomComponents/ProjectActivitiesView/ActivityDetailView?Activity=com.webbridge.entity.Entity[OID[85D5EAE633E... 1/1

Appendix D:

Tampa Bay Times Copyright Approval

7/16/2017

Mail - trbell@usf.edu

RE: Licensing photos for documentary

Tim Rozgonyi <trozgonyi@tampabay.com >

Mon 5/22/2017 10:05 AM

To: Bell, Travis <trbell@usf.edu>;

Sounds good. Below is the licensing language I just wrote up. Look it over and call me if you have any questions or are ready to proceed. (You'll need a credit card for the licensing transaction.)

Terms and Conditions

Times Publishing Co. (dba Tampa Bay Times) grants Travis Bell a non-exclusive license for use of the image(s) listed below. The image(s) are to be used within a documentary film on race relations in Tampa as part of his dissertation project.

Specific terms:

- One-time rights are granted for use of the images for dissertation purposes.
- Rights are granted for up to 5 public or private screenings in a theater or other physical venue.
- Rights are granted for up to 5 broadcast screenings on WEDU-TV only.
- The images cannot be altered, aside from cropping or toning.

Online rights, DVD rights, redistribution rights and any other rights not explicitly granted above are not covered by this license and will require a separate licensing request and agreement.

License fee is \$900.

Photo info:

Barcodes:

AMN-330-TB
AOE-004-TB
APJ-113-TB
ASO-237-TB
AWA-353-TB
AZR-838-TB
AZR-849-TB
AZR-869-TB
AZV-200-TB
AZV-191-TB
AZV-206-TB
AZV-207-TB

Tim Rozgonyi
Licensing and Research Editor

<https://outlook.office.com/owa/?realm=usf.edu&path=/mail/search>

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About the Filmmaker

Prior to beginning my doctoral work in the Department of Communication in 2014, I started at the University of South Florida as a multimedia journalism instructor in the Zimmerman School of Advertising & Mass Communications in 2012. I teach two upper-level video production courses, TV News and Electronic Field Production, so I maintain daily interaction and practice with students on camera operations, lighting, editing, and visual storytelling. The goal of *Tampa Technique* was to balance the aesthetic rigor to produce a broadcast quality film to be televised locally and screened nationally at film festivals while maintaining a critical ethnographic approach to interviews, data collection, and storytelling.

My undergraduate training prepared me for a 12-year career in local television news as a multimedia journalist and anchor. Since leaving the television industry, I remain active in the industry as a freelance videographer and produce corporate videos. Additionally, I completed three documentaries between 2013 and 2016 prior to beginning production of *Tampa Technique*. Each of the first three documentaries screened at various film festivals. I feel that this work appeals to the public as well as academic audiences and reflects my commitment to pushing documentary film forward as a valuable research tool and mode of analysis. This documentary research utilizes the academic principles explored through my coursework to create a rigorous space for critique while allowing my technical abilities to construct what I feel is an effective and complete story of the Civil Rights Movement in Tampa through the lens of Central Avenue.